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IRISH ETHNOLOGY

SOCIALLY AND POLITICALLY CONSIDERED;

EMBRACING

A GENERAL OUTLINE

OF THE

CELTIC AND SAXON RACES;

WITH

PRACTICAL INFERENCES.

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PREFACE.

THE terms "Celt" and "Saxon," though in familiar use, convey to the general mass of readers very indistinct notions of the great classes they are intended to designate. Inquiry is usually terminated by a vague admission, that there must be "something in race;" accompanied by a feeling that further advance would only lead to a region of mystery, a closer approach to which might prove unsafe as well as practically unprofitable.

It is hoped that a perusal of this little volume will dissipate some of this misconception, and secure attention to a subject which, considered socially and politically, will be found to have most important bearings on the condition and prospects of the people of this country.

The present position of European nations lends an additional interest to questions which involve, necessarily, a general consideration of the past, the present,

and the probable future of the two dominant races of the world.

The peculiar aversion shown by political economists to the admission of ethnological differences, as affecting the *mental* features of large divisions of mankind, merits attention. It is easily explained by the consideration that such differences, if established, would render doubtful certain favourite theoretical views, which are at present assumed as universally applicable to all human communities. Their arguments, as far as the writer has seen, are based on the presumption that mental *difference* implies mental *inferiority*—that to admit the latter is to admit the defence put forward for slavery and misgovernment—that such inferiority would preclude the possibility of subsequent advancement—that, therefore, to attempt improvement would be useless, &c. The conclusion evidently intended to be inferred is, that differences of race, however permanent, do not affect *mental* character, and cannot, therefore, interfere with the views of political economists. From the premises as well as from the conclusions of such arguments the writer dissents. His dissent is explained by the facts contained in the following pages.

Another cause of aversion to the impartial investigation of questions of race may be noticed here—the dread of offending prejudices and of increasing antipathies, which already, unhappily, are found to exist in too great abundance. The writer is persuaded that a vast amount of evil has arisen from the concealment of truth consequent on this sentiment—that such prejudices and antipathies have been maintained by ignorance of the true nature and bearings of those most interesting and important relations which form the subject of the present work—that the result of honest inquiry would be precisely the reverse of that anticipated—that a sincere endeavour to arrive at truth in this matter would but lead to a clear knowledge of the true interests of both races—and that, instead of increasing rancorous feeling and widening existing breaches, such knowledge would be found the most efficacious means of terminating mutual animosities, and insuring the mutual advantages of a close and lasting union.

LEESON-STREET,
December 1st, 1851.

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INTRODUCTION.

It has been well and often observed, that Irish nature has never yet been clearly understood by the people of England generally, notwithstanding the propinquity and frequent intercourse of the two nations. The fact, as stated, though remarkable and worthy of all attention, will not, on reflection, be matter of surprise. The striking peculiarities exhibited by the native Irish in habits, in modes of thinking and of acting; their extremes of feeling in joy and affliction; their vivacious contentedness with an humble scale of living (which to a well-fed native of England would strongly resemble starvation); the curious combination so constantly seen among them of patience in suffering with excitability of temperament at all times; present such points of opposition to the national character in England, that the best descriptions of their varied qualities, whether

found in the grave or light productions of Irish writers, can scarcely be felt at all, much less comprehended in their full force, by the great mass of English readers. The English mind, also, being eminently practical, is little given to indulgence in theoretical research, and that there should have existed for centuries in their own immediate vicinity, and under the same common government, a form of mind utterly and unconquerably distinct from that with which they are familiar, is, notwithstanding that the strongest proofs of its truth are afforded by history and observation, a supposition so completely at variance with all their former notions, that hitherto, or at least until very lately indeed, it has been generally considered as belonging to the domains of fancy, and quite unworthy serious consideration. This light estimation of the subject of race is carried further still. The conduct of England towards her various dependencies, however generous and noble in intention, (occasionally it is the reverse) is marked, especially of late years, by a similar infatuation—the one stereotyped idea—acted on in principle, though not perhaps expressed in language, viz. that although nature may have endued the different races of the world with characteristic differences in feature, colour, and bodily configuration, yet that in all she has constituted the mind alone essentially alike, requiring only time and circumstances to alter and assimilate it to that standard

with which an Englishman is best acquainted—his own;—that therefore all men, however incapable of being converted into Englishmen in bodily appearance, may yet be easily adapted by proper education and training, carried on through a few generations, to receive the same moral and intellectual bias, the same ideas of liberty, the same prepossessions in favour of order and submission to the law, in a word, to become thoroughly English in mind while thoroughly foreign in blood;—and further, as a legitimate practical corollary from such views, that the same laws, restrictions, and privileges which are found suitable to the full development of the energies of the people of England, must of necessity be equally suited to the corresponding improvement of all other races under the English government. Now, although the unsoundness of this principle has often been proved, by the want of success attendant on its attempted reduction to practice, and by frequent necessity arising for having recourse to special temporary expedients at variance with the usual policy, and therefore considered empirical; yet to it, on every fresh opportunity, there is a constant recurrence, and it appears to be still regarded as the only infallible guide in legislating for races of men endued by nature with most different and even antagonistic mental constitutions. In very recent times, indeed, accelerated in its progress, no doubt, by the startling character of late events in

Europe, and also perhaps by the publication of certain remarkable lectures and writings by a distinguished Scotch professor, (whose inferences, however, like those of all new theories, are carried much farther than facts can ever warrant), a faint glimmering of the truth appears to have shaken a little the national confidence in this deeply rooted prejudice; a kind of hesitation is becoming apparent, a feeling of insecurity, as to the soundness of the before undisputed dogma, that all races, with similar opportunities of education, are capable of flourishing, even while isolated, under the same governmental management; that because the political and commercial principles carried out by the British senate may have proved admirably adapted to the advancement of the Saxon race, the same principles, with little or no modification, are therefore to be considered the best possible for other races also—fitting models for all the world beside. Opposite views are beginning at length to attract attention, and the idea that permanent differences of race, (permanent at least while isolation continues) in relation to mental as well as physical character, may possibly be found to have some existence in nature, is no longer, as heretofore, considered altogether unreasonable and visionary.

This doctrine, in its latter aspect,—that is, as far as it relates to the physical part of man,—being strongly supported by the experience of centuries, and its truth being very generally felt with respect at least to the

coloured races;* its admission in the other aspect, that is, as to the mental part of man's nature, will be attended with the less difficulty, and the objection of unreasonableness will be found equally groundless in the one case as in the other. For if it be true that even one single race of men can be found which has retained for many ages, in all climates where its existence was possible, and under different degrees of civilization, certain peculiarities of form and feature unmistakable by the commonest observation; can it be thought unreasonable to imagine the possibility, that the features of the mind also, the moral impress,

* That climate alone is the cause of colour may be doubted, when we compare the fair Norwegian Saxon with his neighbour, the swarthy stunted Laplander, for centuries living under the same latitudes: the dark yellow Esquimo (Mongolian) with the Red American. It may be mentioned here, that a celebrated physiologist is driven to the alternative of attributing the dark colour of the fur-clad Lap and Esquimo to exposure! Exposure of the skin in such a climate!

The learned author of "*Man and his Migrations*" ascribes physical contrasts between contiguous populations to the comparatively recent intrusion of one of the two, the other being thus partially displaced. He conceives that all differences are explicable by the gradual action of natural physical causes, and that by encroachment on the one side and the displacement on the other, extremes may at last be brought to meet, as in the above instances. Chronology here forms the difficulty. If a thousand years (and this is a low computation) of subjection to the same climatic influences have had so little effect in assimilating the Lap and Norwegian or the Louchoux Indian and Esquimo, how many ages must it not have taken to produce the contrasts. The Tasmanian is if possible blacker than the negro in a climate as mild as that of England—Van Dieman's Land.

should possess certain equally permanent peculiarities, which, however modified by the pressure of external circumstances in individuals, will be sure to return and make themselves felt in the race generally, whenever that external pressure shall be removed or relaxed? If, on further investigation, using the admitted facts of history, and comparing them with present conditions and events passing daily before the observation of all, it shall be found that the two great races inhabiting the British Islands, the Saxon and the Celtic, have always exhibited, and continue at this day to exhibit, in as distinct and vivid colours as ever, notwithstanding some hundred years of partial intercommunication, the most strikingly opposed mental characteristics—that their ideas of liberty, self-government, industry, economy, civilization, are utterly dissimilar;—there will then be little difficulty in conceiving that those conditions which are best calculated to draw forth the energies of the one race, may possibly not be those most suited to the encouragement of the same in the other; that precisely similar legislative modifications may not perhaps always be the best for both; that, in fine, the great groundwork of race may deserve more attentive consideration than it has hitherto received, and may be found to explain many of those difficulties with which Irish questions have ever been invested.

From what causes the differences of race originated; at what period of the world's history those great

changes were first impressed on mankind; whether suddenly, and contemporaneously with those miraculous changes of language,* which, according to the divine record, appear to have fallen instantaneously upon men at a time when "the whole earth was of one language and one speech;"—are problems now beyond the reach of human research, nor is their solution necessary to the purpose of the writer. It may, however, be not unreasonably supposed that changes of man's language, so great and sudden, may have had some connection with, or dependence on, corresponding changes in both his physical and mental character. How, it is impossible in the present state of knowledge to tell, and seems vain to enquire. Of the origin and final destinies of man we know nothing, except what revelation teaches. Clouds rest upon either terminus. But of this we may be quite assured, that the true in-

* Since the time of Pritchard, language, as a means of determining differences or affinities between many races, contiguous as to position or separated by wide intervals, has gradually been rising into vast importance, furnishing as it does one of the most useful aids to the ethnologist. Glossarial and structural relations in speech are now recognised (though perhaps overrated by some) as of primary value in such investigations. Thus, language and race may be said, generally, to bear a remarkable correspondence, though great difficulties still, and probably ever will, attend this subject.

An ingenious attempt is made by an author before alluded to, partly by transitional affinities in language, to trace the origin of the inhabitants of the most distant extremes of the earth to the hypothetical centre in Asia.

terpretation of Scripture will ever be found to harmonise with the true results of science, and that the brighter the light brought to bear on human discovery, the more clearly will this correspondence be perceived.

The present little work being concerned only with such facts as are admitted by all ethnologists, and established by the clearest historical testimony, it would be foreign to the object of the writer to enter further on the very mysterious subject of the rise and distribution of races in general. Whether ethnological differences are to be accounted for by the supposition of original distinction of species, or by the gradual action of altered physical conditions, or by some sudden interference with natural laws, are questions altogether distinct from the present inquiry, which is entirely confined to the *historic period*; and any allusion to them here is merely to suggest the consideration that, on subjects confessedly invested, as the primary causes of race are, with profound difficulties, the objections of the sceptic are unphilosophical, and his flippancy dogmatism monstrously presumptuous.

Whatever the difficulties of general ethnology may be, they do not apply to the special subject before us. The existence of the two races, the Saxon and Celtic, is universally admitted. Their habitats are distinctly marked. What their condition was two thousand years ago is known. The testimony of ancient writers, as shall be seen, of unimpeachable veracity, is most

clear and striking as to their physical and moral characters at that remote period; and all who choose may test the permanency of these characters, by comparing them with those which, according to all historical evidence, have been exhibited by these races at different intervals during this long course of ages, and with those which furnish at the present day their still equally well marked peculiarities.

The position, then, it is intended to establish here is simply this, viz. that although, in a general view, that assemblage of human passions and human frailties which we understand by the terms "human nature" is common to all mankind, wherever distributed, evidencing the same common humanity throughout the earth's inhabitants; there are yet certain qualities of mind, or *special* tendencies, which have distinguished whole classes of men—races—irrespective of place or climate, and have constituted, as far as authentic history reaches, so far permanent differences between them. Thus, to illustrate our meaning by a single instance, excitability of temperament with regard to the Celtic race has so long appertained to it in all places, as to have rendered this peculiarity proverbial. The Fluellen of Shakespeare, and Hector M'Intyre of Scott, represent accurately this temperament in the Celt of Wales and of the Scotch Highlands. The French Celt, whether of Canada, of France, or of New Orleans, exhibits every where similar constitutional excitability,

and the Irish Celt is certainly not alien to his race in this particular. We shall presently see that other characteristics of extreme interest and importance equally attach to this race, and that the study of these is indispensable to correct views of the questions which affect its progress. To the writer of these pages, viewing the subject now politically, it appears absolutely certain that until the leading differences between the two races shall be clearly ascertained, and the characters indelibly distinguishing the great Celtic family shall be correctly understood, no clear principle for the improvement of Ireland can be laid down, and all remedial measures with regard to her must continue, as they have always been, empirical, the unsatisfactory efforts of blind experiment; some, and even many of late, well adapted to fulfil the good intentions of the legislature; but others, by a counteracting influence, neutralizing in great measure the good effects of these, and paralysing, or at least crippling the best digested plans of the most experienced British statesmen.

The method proposed in the following pages is, 1st. To attempt a short comprehensive sketch of each race separately, (the Saxon and Celtic) embracing those characteristics which neither time nor circumstance have ever been able to eradicate; 2ndly, As occasion offers, to compare the two great races together, contrasting their relative capabilities and tendencies; and 3rdly, To develope practical inferences as to the promotion of

healthful progress in the long misunderstood and mismanaged Celtic race of Ireland.

The writer's design, to keep strictly within the limits of unquestionable facts, precludes an extensive treatment of this most interesting subject of race, as applying to all the divisions of the human family, and embracing the results arising from the intermixture of two or more distinct races; extremely important and instructive as such a disquisition would be, if founded on data of sufficient certainty. We may, however, allude here to the effects of isolation in all races, in removing the traces of foreign blood, provided the admixture has been inconsiderable. This law is well illustrated by the system of infusing small additions of new blood, for the purpose of improving stock among the lower animals. If, after the foreign admixture, isolation be kept up for a lengthened period, each successive generation will shew less and less indication of the strange infusion; till, in the course of time, all physical evidences of the alteration become obliterated, and the purified mass returns at last to the original stock. If the mixed blood should be still required, new importations at certain intervals of time are indispensable.

Now, the Celtic race in Ireland has, through various concurrent causes, been kept for a long period in a state of almost total isolation. The intermingling of foreign blood has been too partial and trifling to have made

itself felt in any appreciable degree. At the present time, except in a comparatively few individual instances, it is not apparent; and until extensive changes shall take place, this state of isolation must continue, preserving the purity of the race, and with it the unchangeable mental features impressed on it by the inscrutable laws of nature. Hence the high importance of the present enquiry. Each race is capable of progress, but *each in its own way*; and to the discovery of that way in the Celtic race, with the best means of aiding, stimulating, and directing its efforts, a knowledge of the permanent mental characteristics of that race must surely form an essential preliminary.

In England, Wales excluded, the great body of the people being of Saxon blood, the Saxon spirit prevails almost universally, and appears to be even intensified rather than altered by the small foreign admixture. The latter circumstance, however, may be ascribed to the natural effect of progress, in drawing forth the innate qualities of this race into stronger relief. The same may be affirmed of the American Union.

In the following pages, it will be seen that the writer has drawn freely on the published lectures of that most original thinker and eminent anatomist, Dr. Knox, though totally opposed to his theological opinions, and also to his theory of natural antipathies between races. The writer does not believe that such antipathies exist naturally. Exclusive feeling is engendered by *local*

isolation, as strongly between groups of men belonging to the same race, as between those of different races, and by traditional transmission only can be considered hereditary. The effects of *isolation by position* are of course more easily corrected than those of *isolation in blood*. Both, as it will be seen, are inimical to Irish progress.

IRISH ETHNOLOGY.

CHAPTER I.

THE SAXON RACE.

A RACE of men marked out from the other inhabitants of our globe by certain physical peculiarities, of which fairness of complexion is not the least remarkable, no other race in the world equalling it in this particular, inhabits at the present day the northern part of Germany along the shores of the Baltic, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Holland, and the greater part of England; and forms the mass in the United States of America. To these are also to be added a portion of Switzerland, the lowlands of Scotland, and the north of Ireland. Their physical characters are thus described: "In all climes and under all circumstances, the Saxons are a tall, powerful, athletic race of men; the strongest, as a race, on the face of the earth. They have fair hair, with blue eyes, and so fine a complexion that they may almost be considered the only absolutely fair race

on the face of the globe. Generally speaking, they are not a well-made or proportioned race, falling off most in the limbs; the torso being large, vast, and disproportioned."*

The few notices which have reached us of the barbarian ancestors of this mighty race (from ancient writers) are extremely striking. At the time Tacitus wrote, about A. D. 50, they were "a peculiar, unmixed race, resembling only itself," "*propriam, et sinceram, et tantum sui similem gentem.*"† They were then also distinguished by those physical characters still so familiar, "*cærulei oculi, rutilæ comæ, magna corpora.*"‡ Their descendants are the only races in Europe now similarly distinguished. Their mental constitution, too, even at that period of barbarism, was equally remarkable; their love of liberty so great that "not even to their kings did they permit unlimited sovereignty," "*Nec regibus infinita aut libera potestas.*"§ Their resistance to the Roman power and the free character of their governments are well sketched in the following remarkable passage from the same writer:—"Neither the Samnites, nor the Carthaginians, nor Spain, nor Gaul, nor even the Parthians have given us more frequent cautions: for the free government of the Germans is more vigorous than the despotism of Arsaces."|| Their social habits at that time presented a remarkable contrast to those of

* Knox, "Races of Men." † *De Moribus Ger.* c. 4.

‡ *De Moribus Ger.* c. 4.

§ *Ibid.* c. 7.

|| *Ibid.* c. 37.

the Gauls, (or Celts), shewing even then traces of that expansiveness and self-reliance which now form such constant attributes of Saxon colonists everywhere. "That no cities are inhabited by the people of Germany is sufficiently known, and that they do not even suffer their houses to be contiguous to each other: they live distinct and separate, according as a well, a field or a wood strikes their fancy."* They differed also from most savage nations in the respect paid to their women, "attributing a prophetic character to them generally, and on special occasions regarding them as divinities."† But the grand characteristics of the race at this time, with all its barbarism, were the evidences of the democratic spirit, the sturdy independence enjoyed by the multitude, and their free demeanour towards their *elected* princes or chiefs (many of their states had no kings). "On matters of minor importance, the chiefs deliberate; on those of greater moment, the whole community." "One inconvenience arises from their liberty, that they do not assemble at the same time, nor as if in obedience to a command; nay, even two or three days are consumed by the delays of those assembling. According as it pleases the multitude, they sit down armed;" and, after hearing the speeches of their leaders, "if the proposal displeases them, they reject it with murmurs; if it be pleasing, they clash their javelins."‡

* De Morib. Germ. c. 16.

† Ib. c. 8.

‡ Ib. c. 11.

This intense love of personal independence, the most marked feature of this people even in savage life, and their great corporeal strength and courage, combined to maintain the distinctive characters of the race through a long period of rudeness and ignorance. Centuries of darkness rolled over, during which the foundations of true liberty still remained unshaken, and the germs were preserved of those free institutions which in after times secured its blessings to their descendants. Progress, as in all barbarous nations, was slow at first, but advanced steadily. A prelude to its more rapid development appears to have been the gradual advancement of the central and inland populations of Germany to the borders, and especially to the districts on the nearest sea coasts, as the shores of the Baltic, where opportunity was offered for the display of that maritime enterprise which has ever since distinguished so remarkably all nations of Saxon blood, wherever located.*

The Saxon's attachment to the sea first naturally exhibited itself in connection with his expansive disposition. As might be expected at this rude period,

* Their places in central Germany are now occupied by the Sclavonian and other races; the fair hair, blue eyes, and massive body of the German of Tacitus having been replaced by a race very different in personal appearance, though a good deal of the old stock may still be found scattered here and there among the newer population.—*Vide* Latham's *Ethnology of the British Colonies*, p. 7.

acquisition of property by the strong hand was unscrupulously pursued, and conquests effected and maintained. The subsequent histories and political conditions of the conquered countries have, no doubt, been variously influenced, according to the amount of the Saxon element introduced in those early times into each. A large portion of England became thoroughly Saxon.

As the dawn of civilization began to brighten, the innate love of adventure and aggrandisement assumed an improved aspect. The sea continued, as before, the favourite medium for operations, but with this difference, that legitimate commerce began at last to take the place of those piratical expeditions which rendered the name of the northern invaders a terror to distant countries. The habits and inclinations of the Saxon have admirably fitted him to win the advantages of commerce in spite of obstacles. In the north of Europe, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, great difficulties stood in the way of mercantile success. These difficulties drew forth the Saxon's resolution, and were at length terminated by the formation of the most powerful mercantile confederacy the world had ever seen, the great Hanseatic League, which, consisting in a short time of "eighty of the most considerable cities scattered through those extensive countries which stretch from the bottom of the Baltic to Cologne

on the Rhine," "became so formidable, that its alliance was courted and its enmity dreaded by the greatest monarchs."*

As centuries rolled on, the principles of self-government and commercial enterprise were gradually unfolding themselves in all the branches of this powerful race. The struggle for free privileges in action and opinion was begun and maintained to a successful issue, in spite of obstacles from foreign and intestine commotions, the opposition of inimical races, and, above all and greater than all, the mighty power of clerical domination.

The Saxon mind was about to throw off its fetters, when, like a spark to prepared fuel, the era of the Reformation came. The startling result now stands clear before the world. The branches of the Saxon race, wherever found, wherever scattered, under all circumstances, in every region of the earth, whether living side by side with those of a different faith, or separate, under their own free governments, are all, without one exception, professors of the reformed religion; while of all the other races in the world who, at the time of the reformation, were in subjection to the Roman church, none, with the exception of a small peculiarly circumstanced portion of one race, have as yet, though spiritual freedom is now making rapid

* Robertson's View of the State of Europe.

strides, professedly rejected her doctrines, and abjured her spiritual authority !*

Races, like individuals, seem to have their periods of infancy, youth, and maturity. The Saxon race in America exhibits the vigour of full manhood. Unshackled by feudal practices, and obsolete European customs and prejudices, the qualities of the Saxon mind have ripened on a soil most favourable to their perfect development ; and here therefore will be found the best materials for the study of the true mental features of the race, as Nature herself has fashioned them. Next to the love of liberty, the character most prominent in Saxon communities is that of respect for and submission to laws made by themselves. The love of order, and respect for the laws of parliament, have long been noted attributes of the English Saxon, and

* Individuals no doubt there are, to be counted perhaps by millions, scattered among all the European nations, professing Roman Catholicism, who are not influenced in the slightest degree by belief in Roman Catholic doctrines. Confirmed infidelity is rife in Europe. There are scattered multitudes, besides, who openly profess the reformed faith, and some small communities in various places, forming Protestant nuclei, from whence, in future times, the reformed religion may perhaps extend ; but what the writer desires to point out is, the peculiar character of mind in the Saxon race, the *first* to break utterly and *universally, avoiding opposite extremes*, those spiritual influences so long accepted by the rest of Christendom. Can stronger evidence be required to prove that the mental conformation of races is not less remarkable than the physical, and that in directing the progress and calculating the future history of a nation, the element of race should never be omitted ?

are essentially connected with the thoroughly democratic nature of the race. The true Saxon makes his own laws, and obeys them without compulsion. His form of government, whenever the selection is permitted him, unfettered by external pressure, is, by whatsoever other term it may be denominated, always truly the representative. No other can satisfy his innate love of freedom. He understands liberty in its true meaning. He can enjoy without abusing it, and the privilege is safe in his keeping. The great experiment of the American Union gives daily testimony to the truth of this statement. The recent settlement of California furnishes a further most interesting corroboration. When the treasures of this golden region were discovered, and became the centre of attraction to all the loose characters in the West, it was confidently predicted by those who left race entirely out of the calculation, that the worst passions of human nature would gain the mastery there, and that the darkest deeds would be committed with impunity—that robbery, murder, and anarchy would reign supreme, and render the place for a long time uninhabitable to the more orderly portion of mankind. To such predictions the writer of these pages constantly replied, that the character of the Saxon race would soon appear in the establishment of order, even in this Pandemonium—that the large admixture of Saxon spirit, sure to flow in the direction of gold, even with this many coloured

and heterogeneous population, including as it did materials so diversified and antagonistic to order, would soon discover means to render life secure and the rights of property respected.

The result may be best stated in a quotation from a well-known weekly journal, *Dickens's Household Words*, for June 29th, 1850:—"Not the smallest wonder, however, presented in this region, is the rapid manner in which social order was shaped out of the human chaos. When a new placer or 'gulch' was discovered, the first thing done was to elect officers and extend the area of order. The result was, that in a district 500 miles long, and inhabited by 100,000 people, who had neither government, regular laws, rules, military or civil protection, nor even locks or bolts, and a great part of whom possessed wealth enough to tempt the vicious and depraved; there was as much security to life and property as in any part of the Union, and as small a proportion of crime. The capacity of a people for self-government was never so triumphantly illustrated. Never, perhaps, was there a community formed of more unpropitious elements; yet from all this seeming chaos grew a harmony beyond what the most sanguine apostle of progress could have expected. Indeed, there is nothing more remarkable connected with the capital of El Dorado, than the centre point it has become."*

* That a community composed like this should exist for any length

These grand characteristics of the Saxon's nature, his love of liberty and love of order, his cheerful obedience (the result of his purely democratic spirit) to laws of his own making, his passion for commercial enterprise, and, a consequence of this, his almost instinctive love of the sea [the Saxons everywhere are the best sailors in the world], have fitted him, better perhaps than any other race now on earth, to work out to the highest advantage all the capabilities of any country, wherever climate permits the exercise of his wonderful energies.

He is no lover of war for its own sake; but readily undertakes it when his liberty is endangered, or a probability of aggrandizement offers. His courage, active and passive, is unsurpassed. Altogether, as a race, he exhibits many of the noblest qualities to be found in man; but races, like individuals, have their darker

of time without occasional outbursts of crime, is of course impossible. Some notorious characters, according to late accounts, presumed on the supposed want of organisation in this infant settlement, as well as on the suspected honesty of the legal functionaries appointed by the central government at home, and threatened to involve the community in general pillage and blood. What followed? The majority of the population rose as one man, appointed a committee, empanelled juries, and, as far as rigorous investigation of truth was compatible with the promptitude necessary at this critical juncture, justice was measured out, and the vast concourse flated the sentences by unanimous approval. All this time, it should be remembered, no violence or insult was offered to the suspected legal authorities.

side also, and to this axiom the Saxon forms no exception.

Lover of liberty as he is, his desire to accumulate often sways his better feelings, and in his acts, especially when self-interest interferes, he does not always admit that the less favoured divisions of the human family have an equal right to its enjoyment. Slavery, in free America, is the great blot on his name and country; but his conscience condemns the principle, while his thirst of gain sanctions the practice.

Conscious of his powers and proud of his race, his self estimation being extreme, he is too apt to look with contempt on the rest of the world. He is unpopular on this account in his intercourse with the inhabitants of other countries, and purchases their toleration by his wealth.

His native candour, when not smoothed down by cultivation, is apt to degenerate into an offensive bluntness.* In this respect as in most others, he is the

* A curiously accurate portraiture professedly by one of the old Spanish chroniclers, of a set of English soldier adventurers under the Earl of Rivers, serving in the Spanish army as volunteers against the Moors, in A. D. 1486, may be found in Washington Irving's "Conquest of Granada." The description, (whether translated from the Spanish manuscript, as asserted, or the author's own) displays one or two points of national character in amusingly strong relief:—"They were a comely race of men, but too fair and fresh for warriors; not having the sunburnt martial hue of our old Castilian soldiery. They were huge feeders also, and deep carousers; and could not accommodate themselves to the sober diet of our troops, but must fain eat and drink after the manner of their own country. They

direct antithesis of the Celt; but before proceeding further with the comparison, attention must first be directed to those prominent and universal traits in the character of the latter race, to which nature has affixed her seal, and which, therefore, like those of the Saxon, neither time nor circumstance have ever been able to remove or alter permanently.

were often noisy and unruly, also, in their wassail; and their quarter of the camp was prone to be a scene of loud revel and sudden brawl. They were withal of great pride; yet it was not like our inflammable Spanish pride: they stood not much upon the 'pundonor' and high punctilio, and rarely drew the stiletto in their disputes; but their pride was silent and contumelious. Though from a remote and somewhat barbarous island, they yet believed themselves the most perfect men upon earth; and magnified their chieftain, the Lord Scales, beyond the greatest of our grandees. With all this, it must be said of them that they were marvellous good men in the field, dexterous archers, and powerful with the battle-axe. In their great pride and self-will, they always sought to press in advance, and take the post of danger, trying to outvie our Spanish chivalry. They did not rush forward fiercely or make a brilliant onset, like the Moorish and Spanish troops; but they went into the fight deliberately, and persisted obstinately, and were slow to find out when they were beaten. Withal, they were much esteemed, yet little liked by our soldiery, who considered them staunch companions in the field, yet coveted but little fellowship with them in the camp."

CHAPTER II.

THE CELTIC RACE.

THOUGH, like the Saxon, adapted to flourish in all temperate climates, this great race appears to have had its chief local habitation, since the commencement of the historic period,* cast in latitudes rather less northerly than those of its larger bodied† and more fair complexioned neighbours. The inhabitants of France form the great central body of the Celtic race, the largest and most important of all its divisions. The irruption into France of the German Franks, about the beginning of the fourth century of the Christian era, though irresistible, and followed by their military occupation of the country, was never able to displace the original race, which, in obedience to natural laws, has now returned

* With the original exodus of this race from the far east in remote antiquity, as proved to the satisfaction of most ethnologists by Dr. Pritchard, we have, here, nothing whatever to do. The clearly ascertained facts of history, accessible to all readers, being only admissible (and quite sufficient) for our purpose.

† “Though in stature and weight, as a race, not equalling the Saxon, the Celt is, weight for weight, stature for stature, age for age, the strongest of men.”—*Know.*

almost to its former purity, showing little or no traces of the German admixture except the name. The other branches of the Celtic race are the Irish, the Welsh, the Highland Scotch, and the Manx, with the offsets by emigration, as the French Canadians, and the Irish of the United States of America.

It is worthy of remark that of the whole numerous and widely diffused Celtic family, there is but one division, and that the great central one, which has preserved itself as a separate and independent nation. How differently circumstanced in this respect the branches of the Saxon family are, we have already seen. France, however, has afforded to the Celtic race ample room and abundant occasion for the full display of all its qualities—its highest capabilities, and lowest tendencies. In Ireland, unhappily, the latter have come most frequently into operation, owing to what causes we shall presently be in a position to comprehend.

The most remarkable, and certainly the most important in relation to the rest of the world, of the mental qualities of the Celt, are—his fighting propensities. With him war is a passion. Content to fight for glory, he cares not much for the issue, provided fame attends. The whole history of France is but a commentary on this text, and her clipt and shorn proportions, without colonies of any value, without her conquests, notwithstanding all her brilliant campaigns

and glorious victories, point to this passion, its folly, and its recompense. The pugnacious irritability of the Irishman, the Welshman, and the Highlander, has been always proverbial. In France every man is military. When well disciplined and commanded, the Celt is the best of soldiers; but if not strongly controuled, he is apt to carry liberty to licentiousness. The conduct of the French soldiery in all countries, and the character of a celebrated Irish regiment, are known to all readers of military details.

The form of government chosen by the Celt, by whatsoever name he may think proper to dignify it, whether under directory, consul, or president, whether commencing as a limited monarchy or a free republic, cannot fail, from the very nature of his race, to pass rapidly into a form more or less despotic. In France, four successive revolutions, within the memory of living men, presented as many golden opportunities of freedom. The last gave high promise. How has that promise been fulfilled? Compare the present liberty of the press throughout France with that in America or England—the passport system, police espionage, and curtailment of the franchise, with Saxon notions of freedom, and say does the Celt yet understand what true liberty is? Is it safe in his keeping? Are the mental constitutions of the two races alike? Can they be governed in *large separate* bodies by similar laws?

The tendency to disorder and disobedience of the

law, which has rendered those stringent regulations indispensable to the existence of any government in France, may easily find a parallel in the Celtic portion of Ireland. A serious crime, a murder, is committed in the open day. Men in the fields or on the road are witnesses. The criminal is pursued by justice. He seeks and obtains sympathy and assistance. Every peasant's house offers him an asylum, and every means is used to thwart and mislead his pursuers. The murderer escapes. The standing army of military and police in Ireland completes the parallel.

But, it will be said, the race may yet alter, and in time acquire Saxon moderation. Let us see what resemblance the same race in the same countries bore to the Saxon, nineteen hundred years ago. Cæsar describes them in Gaul. After proposing to give an account of the "manners of Gaul and Germany, and of the way in which they differ," he proceeds, "In Gaul, not only in every state, and in every canton, and in every division of a canton, but also in almost every single house, there are factions (*factiones, hostile parties*); and the leaders of these factions are those who are thought according to their judgment to possess the greatest weight, to whose arbitration and decision the management of all measures and councils is referred."* The same feature in the British Celt is

* De Bello Gallico, lib. 6, c. xi.

thus noticed by Tacitus, about one hundred years afterwards. "They were formerly subject to kings, now they are divided into factions and parties by ~~their chiefs~~: nor is there anything more advantageous to us against these very powerful people, than that they do not consult together for the general weal. A union of two or three states to repel the common danger is a rare occurrence: thus, whilst they fight singly, they are all subdued."* In the third book of the Commentaries, the following striking passage occurs: "Nam, ut ad bella suscipienda Gallorum alacer ac promptus est animus, sic mollis ac minime resistens ad calamitates perferendas mens eorum est."† Highly excitable and ready at a moment's notice to rush into war, their mind sunk under defeat, their energies were prostrated by adversity, or, in the concise language of Tacitus, "in deposcendis periculis eadem audacia; et ubi advenere, in detractandis eadem formido."‡

The peculiarity so well expressed in the latter part of the sentence quoted last but one, refers to one of the most important, as to social progress, of all the traits of the Celtic character, "minime resistens ad calamitates." It will be seen, on further comparison, that the strength of the Celt resides in union; that, individually, he is remarkably deficient in self-reliance,

* Agricola, c. xii.

† De Bello Gallico, lib. 3, c. 19.

‡ Agricola, c. 11.

the great Saxon virtue; that, thrown on his own resources, without example to stimulate, he is easily disheartened by obstacles and sinks under difficulties, instead of struggling to surmount them; but as this trait shall be frequently referred to and illustrated hereafter, it need not be further dwelt on here.

Nineteen centuries ago, these features of the Celt were the same as they are to-day. At that early period also, as now, the necessity of strict controul was felt, and the means amply afforded by a religious influence of fearful extent, that of the terrible Druids, whose punishment of excommunication was dreaded more than death. The "offender was ranked among the impious, and shunned by the whole community. All justice was denied him."* The author of the Commentaries proceeds to describe the secrecy in affairs of state which it was considered necessary to observe towards the multitude; and in one short pithy sentence mentions a law of which, in a degree at least, French rulers would highly approve, "*De republica, nisi per concilium, loqui non conceditur*," "On state affairs it is not permitted to speak except in council."† The men had the power of life and death over their wives and children.‡

The contrast of the German character, drawn immediately after by the same writer, merits attention. "The customs of the Germans are widely different.

* *De Bello Gallico*, lib. 6, c. 13. † *Ib.* c. 20. ‡ *Ib.* c. 19.

They have no druids nor sacrifices. Of the gods they esteem only those whom they see, the sun, the moon, and fire.”* This description, though not strictly accurate, as the Germans had both priests and sacrifices,† shews remarkably the extreme difference between the races even at that time—the innate freedom of the German mind—the slight influence exercised over liberty by priests and ceremonies; so slight that even Cæsar inferred their non-existence.

On the other hand, the highly imaginative and inexpressible character of the Celtic mind, thus early shown, and transmitted unimpaired through so many centuries down to their modern posterity, explains the curious circumstance, that the Celt with all his love of change should have been less eager than his Saxon brother, when the same opportunity was presented to both, to leave the Roman Catholic faith for one divested of mysterious and ceremonial fascination—for one which Protestants regard as more conformable to the pure and simple worship of primitive Christianity. The fact at least must be admitted, that now all Saxons are Protestant; and all Celtic bodies, except those portions of them in the immediate neighbourhood of the Saxon, are still nominally adherent to the Church of Rome. The exceptions are easily explained by the effect

* De Bello Gallico, lib. 6, c. 21.

† The Germans treated their priests with much respect, and entrusted to them the preservation of order in their public assemblies.—*Vide Tacitus, Agricola, c. 11.*

of close proximity to and free communication with a Saxon country. Thus, in Wales, the sudden and total suppression of the monasteries by Henry the Eighth, and the improved intercourse which took place at that time, (the union of the two countries having been just then completed, and the authority of the King's courts extended everywhere through the principality,*) prepared the way for a more speedy reception of the reformed faith, than under other circumstances could, humanly speaking, have been effected.

The progress of civilization in the two great modern representatives of the respective races, England and France, may be taken as another illustration of permanent mental differences. The early histories of these two countries were in many respects alike. Both were subjected to Roman sway for about the same periods. Into both, when this had elapsed, was introduced the feudal system† with its train of military oppressors, the great lords or barons, whose frequently abused privileges set at nought all justice and defied even regal authority.‡ In both, the struggle between sovereign

* Hume, vol. 4, ch. 31, p. 152.

† The divisions of property, at first allodial or unencumbered by conditions of service to the chief lord, soon from various causes merged into feudal tenures, which by reducing the occupiers to serfdom, long served to shackle liberty and retard progress.

‡ "The English barons were *necessitated* to insert in Magna Charta clauses favourable to the people; they could not expect the concurrence of the people, without comprehending, together with their own, the interests of inferior ranks of men."—Hume, Hist. of England, vol. 2, ch. 11, page 90.

power and baronial ambition was long maintained. How different the results in each! Step by step, as the fortunes of the great contest swayed to one side or the other, openings were presented to the popular masses, the great third estate in embryo, to secure privileges for their order and assert the natural rights of man. Step by step in England, these hard-won privileges (occasionally lost in part, but always recovered with interest, through centuries of stubborn resistance and heroic but well regulated aggressions on power), were multiplied and consolidated into that broad and stately edifice—the exponent of the representative principle—the British constitution, to which despots look with trembling, and their victims in every part of the world with hope. The same contest between sovereign and feudal lord prevailed long in France—also with varying success. The same advantageous openings were presented to the masses; but no benefits accrued. Kings were worsted; but the people still suffered. Nobles were humbled; but the people were not raised. None struggled for true liberty, and this strife of ages terminated at last in one uncontrolled and unmitigated despotism, to be succeeded by such alternations of anarchy with sudden returns to centralization, that the policy of France is no longer trusted: the oppressed fear to ask her aid or sympathy; and absolutism almost inclines to place its best hopes in her inconsistency.

CHAPTER III.

CELT AND SAXON.

THE modern Celt, everywhere, differs from the modern Saxon in almost every particular. His habits are not favourable to commerce. Though, from his maritime situation, possessing ample facilities for trading, he has never shewn much inclination for the sea, and nature seems not to have fitted him for much success on that element. His exploits in naval warfare have gained him neither fame nor conquest. He therefore affects much contempt for trade, and his notions of glory do not extend to the arts of peace, and the useful occupations of "a nation of shopkeepers."

The Celt is naturally the politest of men. This trait is evidenced to a surprising degree, in the manners of the poorest and most uneducated of the Irish natives, even of those who have never been out of sight of the wild bogs and hills of their country—remote from all civilizing influences. The refinement of thought in these people—the wish to please, shewing itself in every word and action—the delicacy in approaching any sub-

ject on which a difference of opinion may exist—the tact with which a disagreeable subject is avoided, and a pleasing one substituted—the insinuating flattery and deference to superiors—the artful humility, and apparent absence of self—all these are truly wonderful in beings who have never had opportunities of cultivation, and who owe all the advantages they may happen to possess to the hand of nature. To the person who has become familiar by long residence with the manners of the uneducated native Irish, and has had means of comparing them with those of the uneducated Saxon, no stronger proof is necessary of the complete dissimilarity of the two races.

But in intimate connection with this instinctive politeness, there is to be found, unhappily, a less pleasing trait—one which has given to the nation an unenviable notoriety. The Irish have often been accused of an inveterate disinclination to truth; and, though much of this character may with fairness be attributed to education, the indictment, it is to be feared, can be but too strongly sustained. Deceitfulness, at least, is common in the race, and, in combination with the passion of revenge, is the root of much evil. Secret societies and conspiracies for unlawful purposes take their rise here, fostered by the confidence which the Celt always feels in union, and rendered formidable by injuries received, by hereditary antipathies, by religious animosity, and, above all, by the speeches and writings of

influential demagogues. While the straightforward and self-reliant Englishman, when aggrieved, fights his battle in the ring, in the law courts, or at the hustings, as the case may be; the Celtic Irishman, confident in union, and trusting to the difficulties in the way of discovering crime, has recourse to the Ribbon society, and, through it, to the threatening notice, the sudden assault by numbers on the single waylaid victim, or to the deadly blunderbuss.

The social habits of the Celt, so widely different from those of the Saxon, are worthy of special attention, as exercising a most important influence on his progress at home and abroad. He loves society, and dislikes solitude. Abroad he is the same. He cannot, like the Saxon, summon resolution to encounter alone the dark forest and desolate prairie. In associated bodies, with men of other races, the Celt will endure much and perform much. With Saxon examples sufficiently numerous by his side, (and this is a most encouraging trait in his character) he can and does work with the greatest perseverance and ability. Alone, his heart sinks and his moral courage fails. The French Canadian Celts, whose isolation from the Saxon has been perpetuated by difference of language and religion, have never penetrated the recesses of the country. Their children do not, like those of the Saxon, strike out boldly into the wilderness, trusting to their own strong hands and innate resolution. They cling toge-

ther in villages and hamlets, and acquire, like the Celt in Ireland, the strongest attachment to the soil of their birth and the patches on which their fathers lived and died. From these, nothing but the strongest motives can produce the voluntary dislodgment of the Celtic occupant. Keeping in mind this trait, one may form some idea of the present depressed condition of the Irish Celt, from the immense emigration going forward, even in the depth of the winter season,—until the last years of the present famine an unprecedented occurrence in Ireland.

The same social habits attend the Celt wherever he is found—the same want of dependance on self—the same clinging to the soil and to his family; and their importance in the history of Celtic progress can scarcely be overrated. They lead invariably and inevitably to the minute subdivision of property, wherever title gives the power, as in France; or the negligence or will of the landlord countenances the system, as in Ireland.* The final result, of course, must be

* By subdivision of property is meant here not merely subdivision of the *land*, but that of *capital* also, which leads to the same result; for it matters little whether a man possesses a large quantity of land, if he have not sufficient capital to cultivate or stock it. Thus, although the farms in some of the Celtic parts of Ireland are on the average larger, real subdivision, that is, the minute division of property, exists to an infinitely greater extent than in the northern counties. But, as shall be seen presently, Saxon subdivision is in its nature quite a different affair, and a *sure sign of prosperity*.

extreme poverty in any country which may be entirely or chiefly dependent on agriculture. In Ireland, the forty-shilling franchise unfortunately encouraged to the utmost a system always too congenial to Celtic habits. The element of race was, as usual, overlooked. Subdivision, with the assistance of the potato, multiplied the population to such an extent in many districts, particularly along the coast, that without this esculent they could not be supported. As poverty increased, ejectments became more numerous, and the long approaching crisis of the landowners, which must have arrived sooner or later, (supposing the country to have remained purely agricultural) was only precipitated a few years by the destruction of the all important crop.

This fatal system of subdividing property in Ireland is attributed by many, but most untruly, to the universal cultivation of the potato. This plant, it is no doubt true, will singly maintain a much greater population than any other known crop suited to the soil and climate; but there is no reason to believe that if it had never been imported, the condition of the country would have been much or at all superior to what it was before the late famine. Whatever might have been the quantity of food produced in Ireland from any other description of crops, the equally minute subdivision of that quantity of food would have been the result of the innate social habits of the Celtic inhabi-

tants. The sole differences would have consisted in the somewhat larger size of the subdivisions of land which its inferior quantity of produce would have compelled, and in the less rapid increase of the population; which, however, would have maintained an equal ratio to the quantity of food, and therefore would have been similarly dependent on the soil as at present, and in a similarly inferior social position—at least, as before the famine. Grain crops, and particularly rye and oats, would probably have furnished the main support of the inhabitants, who would then have been equally dependent for existence on these crops, as they are at present on the potato. And if we suppose the case that the potato had never been introduced into Ireland, and that the grain crops had been smitten, as the potato has been, by several successive blights, the native character fully warrants the conclusion, that although the number of sufferers in this case might not have been so great, in consequence of a smaller amount of population, yet that the degree of suffering would have been equally severe—perhaps even more so than that which has succeeded the late unparalleled calamity. But leaving all extraordinary visitations of this kind out of the question, one important truth to be learned from the history of the Celt is this, that wherever he locates himself in large isolated bodies, depending for subsistence on the soil, and exercising free power over it, there subdivision will be found to prevail, and its sure

consequences to follow—capital gradually diminishing, and the scale of living gradually lowering, till it becomes reduced at last to the lowest possible degree consistent with the necessities of human existence.

How widely different from these are the habits of the go-a-head Saxon, when free to choose his own career among his fellows? In the western states of America it not uncommonly happens that sons, as they arrive at maturity, will singly take leave of their Saxon parents, with the acknowledged resolution of never re-visiting home. A portion is given to each as he quits the parental roof. With this, and his firm resolve, he wins an independent position, either as a settler in another part of the Union, or, if that suit not his purpose, as an adventurer in trade or in some one of the many openings which that great country offers to youthful enterprise. He values land as he does any other kind of property, and has no hesitation, if he should hope to gain by the exchange, to convert his share of the patrimonial acres into money. There is no clinging to the land with him—no contentedness with poverty and stinted fare, while demand exists in any part of the world for strength of body and vigour of mind.

But minute subdivision of the land is found also in districts chiefly inhabited by this race, as in the north-eastern counties of Ireland, and yet the inhabitants of these districts are, of all others, the most thriving and comfortable. The fact has attracted much attention.

The explanation is easy and plain. The Saxon, when depending solely on the soil for subsistence, will never subdivide to a degree which would reduce himself and his offspring to pauperism. No instance can be produced of a number of individuals of this race squatting down contentedly on a portion of land, and subdividing this, their sole dependence, for successive generations, till poverty at last overtakes them, and starvation alone checks their increase. Thus, in the abovementioned districts, the counties of Down, Armagh, and Antrim, the soil is by no means the sole support of the small holder. In most cases, it is not even his chief support. If it were, he could not exhibit, as he does, that appearance of neat and comfortable independence, which at once catches the eye of the traveller. The small holdings here serve the purpose of so many fixed points, from which the industry of the hardworking holders and of their families radiates. The labour necessarily connected with the cultivation of flax, the employment afforded by the *loom* in all weathers and seasons, and any other means of profitable exertion within reach—supply well the place of land, and enable the cottage inmates to enjoy the comparative comforts of life; while their Celtic fellow-countrymen in the west and south, with larger holdings and lower rents, (in the south, with much superior land) can with difficulty, even in the best seasons, eke out a sufficient

subsistence. It would be easy to calculate what the result would be, if it were possible at this moment to withdraw from the north of Ireland all its means of manufacturing industry. Would the Saxon part of the population cling still to a soil unable to support their numbers in comfort, and settle down in starvation and wretchedness? All experience forbids the supposition. The interest in the smaller holdings (thanks to tenant-right, of Saxon origin) would be sold for whatever it might bring, to larger holders; the former occupiers would remove to some more profitable field of industry; and farms would increase to a size, and rents fall to a measure proportionate to the requirements of a people without other means of support. How the Celt would act in a like case has been already seen. Nothing short of the failure of his sole hope, the potato, could separate him from his beloved soil.

It should be remarked here, that in the counties just mentioned many of the native Irish reside; and, although not equalling the other race in the appearance of neatness and comfort visible to the stranger, they here display a very favourable point in the Celtic character, which is, that the Celt, perhaps of all other men, can most easily accommodate himself to the circumstances in which he is placed; his quick intelligence and perception of character rendering easy the acquisition of the habits and customs of those with whom he mixes, provided *his own clan* be not sufficiently

numerous around him, to keep up the evils of *isolation*. Thus, in the above counties, many instances of thrift and hard work are to be found in individuals of this race, though they are almost invariably in the class of the smallest holders in the country. These, however, are sufficient to establish that fact here at home, which their countrymen abroad daily prove to the world, that the impulse of industry can and does extend itself to the native Celtic Irishman, when, for his natural want of self-dependence is substituted the strong encouragement of labour around him; when he witnesses, on all sides, toil willingly undergone and cheerfully sustained, and learns to appreciate the substantial benefits which are the worthy fruits of such labour.

Subdivision of land, then, in Ireland presents two widely different aspects. That practised by the easily contented Celt, whose sole dependence it forms, leads inevitably to poverty. That practised by the self-dependent, calculating Saxon, who justly views land as he does any other kind of property, and uses it for the purposes best calculated to yield him independence, is highly advantageous in every way. It greatly increases the number of industrious hands; it creates a ready market for the products of the farm; and, as a consequence, it enhances considerably the value of the land itself.

The commercial abilities of the two races, it has

already been said, are widely different. Perhaps nothing will exhibit this truth more forcibly, than the comparison of the natural capabilities of the harbours which form the great outlets of the Saxon colony in the north of Ireland, Belfast and Newry, and their present condition as ports of trade—with those of the southern and western coasts, Wexford, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Westport, Galway, and Sligo, outlets all to the Celtic counties, and including some of the finest harbours in the world. Cork—with its population of 100,000, and its harbour at Cove, the beauty, amplitude, and safety of which are universally known: its trade, in the victualling department at least, has received all the encouragement in the power of any government in fairness to bestow, and the waterpower of the Lee presents manufacturing facilities. Limerick—commanding the largest and noblest river in the British Islands, the broad Shannon, whose fine expanse should long since have been burthened with the mineral and vegetable wealth of the immense valley through which it flows. The waterpower of Doonass neglected! Galway—with its internal water-communications and its advantages for manufactures already tried with very poor success. The nearest port to America, it has obtained hitherto but a small share of even the Irish emigration traffic, which, from its situation, it should long ago have monopolized. Wexford and Waterford, the latter at least an excellent harbour,

and, with Cork, eminently qualified by position for commercial relations with England. Compare with these the harbours of Belfast and Newry. The latter for a long distance artificial; the former of easy access, but shoaling toward the extremity, and having already required the outlay of large sums in improvement—forcing its trade against many discouragements; and yet, according to the report of the Tidal Harbour Commissioners for 1846, the income of these ports alone more than equalled, most probably they now greatly exceed the entire receipts of all the above enumerated harbours together.

The history of Belfast illustrates the successful struggles of the Saxon settlement of Ulster, against a competition and a legislation which at once prostrated the feeble efforts in the wool and flax trade made by the other provinces. In the teeth of opposition, and with great disadvantages in importing the raw material, Belfast, notwithstanding, has held her place against all competitors, and has now become the centre of almost the whole manufacturing industry of the island.

Commercial enterprise, with its widely spread ramifications and towering results, is indigenous to the Saxon race. Its rise and progress amongst them resembles the growth of a vast tree in its favorite soil. Each fibril of the expanded root conveys material to increase the mass, which shoots vigorously upward in spite of all obstacles, requiring no extraneous forc-

ing—no other aid than the *free* exercise of its own natural powers. In a Saxon community the rise of commercial industry is *essentially internal*. When, from small beginnings, capital accumulates in the hands of the most industrious or intelligent members, that capital is not suffered to *remain inactive*. New investments are effected—new hands are employed—new markets sought for or created. Machinery is made to lend its powers, and the ocean to convey the products. The country about the seat of manufacture feels the impulse, and the neighbouring population, Celt and Saxon, participate in the happy influences which industry and the arts of peace diffuse around.*

In an isolated Celtic community, on the contrary, the rise of trade and manufacture has internal obstacles to contend with, which, without extraordinary encouragement and stimulation *externally* applied, will often render the best natural advantages unavailing. When capital accumulates in the hands of the par-

* Could the Celt but be made to feel that the labour-loving Saxon, against whom his prejudices have been so long and so painfully excited, would in truth become his best friend and coadjutor in the development of his country's great resources, and that without his assistance, instruction, and example, his own progress in every way will be greatly retarded, if not altogether obstructed by the numerous obstacles always in the way of ignorance and poverty; a new era would commence in the history of Ireland, and her present querulous helplessness would soon be exchanged for resolute cooperation in economising to the best advantage those materials of prosperity which nature has liberally bestowed, and of which the Saxon well knows the value.

ticularly saving among them, *there it remains unproductive*. A timorousness of speculation, proceeding from the inherent want of individual self-reliance, forbids any undertaking the success of which will depend on individual enterprise, sustained against the forebodings of friends, or at least their denial of encouragement. If the speculation, however promising in prospect, however demonstrable its advantages, be a new thing, unknown to the immediate experience of the neighbourhood, the probability of any one undertaking the risk will be very small indeed. Hence the acknowledged difficulty of introducing into such a community any improvements, even in agricultural matters, especially if these improvements should require additional outlay. In this case the Celt will prefer hoarding his gains, and pursuing the antiquated system of his fathers. The present is, perhaps, the only period at which the Irish Celt ever showed an inclination to be guided by foreign counsel in his farming operations. The reason is manifest. The failure of the potato for so many successive seasons has at last shaken his confidence in this crop, hitherto his sheet-anchor—his almost sole dependance—and he knows perfectly well that, with his little patch of land and his want of means, no other crop with which he is acquainted can save himself and his family from the horrors (to him) of the poor-house. Finding, then, his old system cut away from under his feet, and knowing no other, he is now passive in the

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hands of the instructor, and in this way will open his mind to new impressions, and give a trial to new methods. The occasion, though arising from intense suffering, is certainly favourable to the advancement of the race in Ireland; and it is to be hoped that in agricultural reforms, as well as in other matters, this great opportunity may not be allowed to pass unimproved.*

* A curious instance of the inactive condition in which money savings, which might have been applied as profitable capital, are allowed to lie dormant for years in the hands of even the better order of the farming classes in Ireland, came to light lately in a sale under the Incumbered Estates Act, in the County of Cork. The property was put up in small lots, to suit the smaller class of purchasers, and on the completion of the sales, the rolls of notes, produced for payment by those small purchasers of their own farms, shewed unmistakeable signs, by their smoked and ancient appearance, and the old dates of the notes, of not having seen the light for it would be difficult to say how many years. When such is the spirit pervading that class from which the first beginnings of improvement in the proper use of capital ought naturally to proceed, one need not be surprised that, even with the advantages of the best harbours and the finest water-power, the benefits of commerce and manufacturing skill have not as yet penetrated the recesses of Celtic Ireland.

A fact illustrative of Irish want of self-reliance, and hesitation to put in practice the common principles of trade when ample opportunity is afforded, may be here mentioned as having come not long since within the writer's own experience. On the north-west coast of the island, where a portion of a Connaught county, narrowed almost to a point touches the sea, the inhabitants are, almost without an exception, purely Celtic; not wanting in intelligence, but long and entirely isolated by influences of blood and of religion, as well as by position, and presenting with remarkable distinctness the characteristics above described. The county is here bordered by a small river, on which the proprietor

The Celtic race of France have never yet developed the mercantile resources of their great country, notwithstanding its excellent geographical position commanding the Atlantic and Mediterranean, and the great efforts made at different times to compete with and drive England out of the market—the strongest motive of encouragement, perhaps, that could possibly be suggested. France has a population of more than thirty-five millions. With cheap food, an inexpensive scale of living, and so many hands, labour should be comparatively cheap; yet skilled labour brings a high price, as is proved by the number of English artisans until lately employed in that country. The jealousy which caused their removal will of course inflict its

of the neighbouring estate has, within the last ten or twelve years, erected a very excellent corn-mill at an expense of about £1300; expecting, no doubt, a liberal interest for his outlay in a corn-growing district, such as this has always been. What is the result? The miller's office has been ever since almost a sinecure; and although the consumption of oatmeal is considerable, particularly in times when the potato crop is not abundant, the retailers, instead of buying up corn in the neighbourhood at a low price, and having it ground for a mere trifle in the mill close at hand, send their ready money to the nearest towns for the ground article, paying a much higher price, and retailing at an exorbitant one. This of course checks the general demand, preventing the quick sale and frequent return of profit which a little more complicated but still sufficiently simple management of capital would ensure, to the mutual advantage of seller and buyer. The writer has the satisfaction to add, that an active and experienced Scotchman has just arrived in the locality described, and taken a lease of the mill. Better things, no doubt, may be soon expected.

own punishment. Her mercantile navy has an aggregate burden of but 700,000 tons, while that of England carries 2,000,000; and as to the more important manufactures, in silk alone is she able to approach the latter country; a fact perhaps worthy of being remembered in reference to the manufacturing capabilities of Ireland, where singular skill has already been exhibited in the beautiful fabrics of the poplin loom.

CHAPTER IV.

ORDER.

It is not wonderful that the Englishman, unacquainted with Ireland, cannot be made to understand the Celtic character. Its salient points are at variance with all he has heard or seen in England. He imagines that discontent in either country must be owing to pretty much the same causes. In England, a deficiency in the supply of food is sure to be followed by disturbances in the distressed locality. The Saxon chafes under the deprivation of what he considers his birth-right, a fair field for his labour and its just reward. Distress and disturbance in England are, therefore, generally looked upon as cause and effect, and on this account a bad harvest in that country has always been sufficient (at least in the time of the corn laws) to give great anxiety to even the most popular statesmen. When an Englishman, therefore, hears of outrage in Ireland, arguing from the results with which he is familiar, and admitting no difference of race, he attributes a great share of it to starvation. No impression can be more unfounded in truth. The extraordinary

passiveness in suffering, and patient resignation to the will of Providence, exhibited in Ireland for the last six years, have excited the just astonishment of all who witnessed them, and present a characteristic feature of the people, utterly incomprehensible to Saxon minds. To those who have studied the race, the observation made by Cæsar in his description of the same race (quoted before) will at once occur, "*mollis ac minime resistens ad calamitates perferendas mens eorum est.*"* Utter prostration of mind accompanied the late famine, and in the distressed districts personal outrages, so rife before, greatly diminished in number or disappeared altogether. The spirit for crime was gone, and none remained even for improvement. No new plans in agriculture were attempted, unless forced on and fostered by the constant efforts of some benevolent individual.† This deficiency in the quality of self-reliance

* De Bello Gallico, lib. 3, ch. 10.

† When we consider that the standing army of police in Ireland has of late years been greatly augmented, (it now amounts to upwards of 12,000 men); that a greatly increased number of convictions might have been expected from the trained vigilance of this large force; that the number of ejectments was enormously and progressively multiplied from the first years of the famine to the present time; and that in former years the worst description of outrages was connected with ejectments (the tearing asunder the tie between land and its occupier being always, in Ireland, the strongest incentive to violence); it will appear unaccountable, except on the principle above stated, that the criminal records of the last six years should not have displayed a vastly increased amount of capital convictions. The famine commenced in

is always seen in the Celtic race, when under defeat or severe calamity. When the difficulty passes away, they recover with celerity, and, united again in masses, are prepared for a renewal of action; but with the individual the rule holds at all times. If left to his own solitary efforts, unencouraged by example, unexcited by external stimulation, he will attempt nothing new, and will remain content and even cheerful with the bare means of subsistence, and the liberty of his miserable hovel; but in states of difficulty and depression, which, when not overwhelming and insurmountable, rouse the Saxon to further efforts, the Celt is paralysed.

The prevalent English idea, that the Saxon mind, its modes of thought, and the motives which influence it, represent the mental basis in all other men—that

1845. In that year the number of capital sentences touched its lowest point, being 13, within a period of eleven years from 1839 to 1849, both inclusive. In 1839, the number of capital convictions was 66. In 1846 but 14. In 1847 and 1848 the public relief works were executed; the rapid circulation of large sums, and the improper though perhaps unavoidable mode of distribution being productive of the most baneful demoralization. In the latter year was added the general excitement consequent on the last French revolution; and a similar catastrophe was apprehended here, on the supposition that the miseries endured by Ireland had rendered her ripe for an explosion. The number of capital convictions for the two last mentioned years was 25 and 60 respectively, and the signal failure of the bloodless rebellion is fresh in the minds of all. In 1849 political excitement fell, but the famine and ejections continued, and the number of convictions was but 38.

the manner in which the Saxon will act under certain circumstances being known, the same mode of action may be predicated with certainty of other races under the same circumstances—is the source of infinite misconception; and it is the application of this idea in the policy of England towards this country for many years, that has created so much disappointment in its want of success, that Ireland has at last become the synonym for all that is unreasonable and unintelligible, and has acquired from the universal press of England the appellations of “paradox” and “difficulty.” Thus, as we have seen, distress in England being commonly followed by disturbance, the poverty of Ireland has been naturally enough assigned by English thinkers as the cause of Irish disturbance. But poverty, although the great evil of Ireland, is not the cause of Celtic agitation. Before the occurrence of famine, the masses, it is well known, were infinitely more open to agitating influences than they are at present. Their minds are now too much engrossed and depressed by real evils, to admit of any foreign excitement, and therefore it is that we no longer hear of repeal and independence, so long the themes of their highest aspirations.*

* What would have been the state of Irish feeling, had the famous act of last session been even attempted before the famine? Would the people then have responded by solemn silence to the exciting speeches of the Defence Association, headed as it is by their primate and once powerful hierarchy?

A clear comprehension of this peculiarity of the Celtic mind is absolutely necessary to the explanation of the extraordinary fact, that the Ribbon conspiracy against life and property, which before the famine pervaded the entire length and breadth of Celtic Ireland, was allowed to remain in a state of almost total abeyance during the worst years of that calamity, when ejections, the great incentives to this combined system of bloody defence, were more numerous and wholesale than ever known before; and agrarian outrages became so rare, that fond expectations were beginning to be entertained of a general improvement in the moral character of the Irish masses. With the diminution of extreme suffering, however, came the unpleasant conviction that the snake was as yet but scotched; and within the last twelve months, notwithstanding the thinning by emigration, and the diminished tendency to eject, several serious offences, bearing unmistakeably the Ribbon character, have again appeared, though almost entirely confined to those parts of the island where the circumstances of the people have most improved.

The manner in which the society carries on its operations is fully described in the evidence given before the Committee of the House of Lords in 1839, on the state of crime in Ireland. It is sufficient here to state, that its organization and extent before the famine were such, that the utmost difficulty

was experienced in the detection and punishment of crime. Strangers brought from a distance were the usual instruments for carrying into effect projected outrages; and conviction was often rendered impossible, the witnesses to the deed, if any, being all affiliated Ribbonmen, or friendly to a society in which their fathers, sons, or brothers were included.

The mysterious secrecy and vindictive character of the system harmonise too well with the tendencies of the Celtic mind; hence its rapid increase and powerful influence in former times. And perhaps not its least attractive feature is the feeling of confidence which the union of numbers gives even in a bad cause, and which with the Celt, as we have seen, always forms a peculiar desideratum.

The original objects of the Ribbon society were chiefly of a religious and political nature. Its jurisdiction at present appears to be exerted altogether in agrarian matters. That this is so, appears from the fact, that the murders and other outrages committed by the agency of strangers have of later years been entirely connected with land disputes; but whatever changes may have taken place in the objects of the society, its organization is still the same; its extent, if not checked, may again become alarming; and its repulsive influence on the Saxon's approach is still very considerable, if we may judge by the small amount of English capital as yet invested in Irish

property, notwithstanding the numerous opportunities for profitable outlay afforded by the sales in the Incumbered Estates Court.

It is encouraging, however, even to imagine that the progress of intelligence may at length have demonstrated the injurious tendency of former views; and there is much ground for hope that, with the advance of education properly directed, and other measures, the Celt may yet become thoroughly impressed with the ruinous consequences to the prosperity of his country, of perpetual combination against all law and order; and that if he were once thoroughly acquainted with the characteristic failings of his race, and with the knowledge that by the assistance of Saxon capital, skill, instruction, and example, his country, instead of being, as it is, a by-word in the civilized world, would rise rapidly into importance, and reach a position second, perhaps, to none; his prejudices would be subdued, and a large portion of the most intelligent and best instructed would lend their willing aid to the securing of the first preliminaries to success, the abolition of secret societies and the establishment of order.

CHAPTER V.

PRACTICAL INFERENCES.

It is generally thought that this contrasting of race with race, instead of serving any useful purpose, can only tend to the indulgence of invidious comparisons, and the perpetuation of hostile sentiments; and a guarded avoidance of this topic has accordingly been observed by all writers aspiring to popularity in Ireland. The author of the present little work is deeply persuaded that such impressions are both fallacious and injurious; and that a clear and honest exposition of the great truths displayed by the histories and present conditions of the two races, if brought fairly before the notice of those most concerned, would be attended with results precisely opposite to those apprehended. The first steps to improvement are, a consciousness of the deficiencies which require it, and a clear knowledge of the causes of those deficiencies. When these are known, what to hold in view and what to avoid will be ascertained, and the efficacy of remedial measures will no longer rest upon the chance experiments of political charlatanism.

As it has often been a favourite speculative fancy with Irish (so called) patriots, that if Ireland were but left to make her own laws and govern herself independently of England, she would soon attain prosperity and take high rank among the nations; it may be instructive to pursue this subject for a moment, and examine how far, according to the characters described as essential to the race, this result might be considered possible or probable. Let us suppose the Saxon expelled, and the dreams of the most ardent patriots realised; the Celt in full possession, and free to choose his own form of government. What would be his future history? The answer may be given in a few words:—that of France on a minor scale. The novelty of his position would probably keep him quiet for a time. A free republic would of course be first attempted—Saxon institutions grafted upon Celtic nature. Elections would follow. Imitating the Saxon at first, he would permit no military interference for the enforcement of order. No gendarmerie, national guard, nor even police, probably, would be considered necessary for this model republic, during its free enjoyment of the privileges of universal franchise. His fighting propensities, having now full scope, would of course come immediately into play. Scenes of turbulence would ensue. The discussion and rejection of various plans, and the ambitions of contending interests, would probably sustain this excitement for a lengthened pe-

riod. Some leader of superior capacity would at last rise above his fellows, and, under a liberal name, seize on the sovereign power. Skilfully concentrating the turbulent elements on a common object, he might secure internal peace. United to repel foreign aggression or by voluntary interference in foreign hostilities, preferring the pursuit of glory to the arts of peace, as a nation supported by foreign alliance, Ireland would become a formidable enemy, and to England a dangerous neighbour. Without the favour of the latter country, however, her commerce would be utterly insignificant. Poverty would still continue. In time of peace, turbulence and secret conspiracies would be restrained by the strong arm. The surveillance of a large police force, or national guard, would be at length found essential to the preservation of order, and Saxon liberty would disappear for ever. Military fame would be the sole compensation for poverty and the loss of freedom. Intercourse with foreign nations would now draw forth the natural polish of the race, and give a higher tone to manners: the fine arts would take root and thrive. A close alliance with France might possibly introduce certain manufactures, as those of silk and beet-root sugar; but with England, competition to any extent would be out of the question. Saxon capital and skill, naval enterprise, and resolute contempt of obstacles, would be an easy overmatch for the comparative poverty and want of commercial spirit of the land-loving Celt.

The anticipations of high prosperity and perfect independence so often indulged in by Irish revolutionists, are founded on an utter ignorance of the permanent natural qualities of the Irish people, and of the true political lesson to be derived from them, which is this: that Ireland, in her present state of union with the greatest nation in the world, if willing to profit to the utmost by Saxon example, skill, and instruction, might reach, if she pleased, a degree of prosperity, while she continued to enjoy an amount of liberty, infinitely superior to any she could possibly attain either as an independent nation or under the protection of any foreign power: that her geographical position will always render her commerce dependent on England's good will: and that against Saxon competition in the principal manufactures, the most vigorous efforts of unaided Celtic industry can never be expected to prevail. The true road to greatness for Ireland is that trodden by the Saxon. In a closer union with England resides the sure development of her elements of strength, and on this point, as on a centre, must turn (to be attended with success) all new plans and speculative proposals for her improvement.

To this close union with England great obstacles are opposed; but none, which by proper measures may not be greatly diminished and finally removed. Steps in advance have already been taken, which, if not frustrated by false ones in legislation, will be productive of

vast social benefit. But a new danger threatens. Emigration progresses at a fearful rate. The Celt will no longer wait for better times. He has lost all confidence in his only anchor—the potato. What is to replace it if he remains? He cannot tell! This is his present great and immediate difficulty—the source of his panic terror. He is the creature of impulse and example, and these now drive him headlong to foreign shores. With all his deficiencies, he has many most estimable and loveable qualities; and without him, Ireland, however advanced in civilization and greatness, will not again exhibit the true social happiness, the joyous content, the cheerful laughter-loving spirit, the warm heart, the genuine hospitality, which, whenever good times, few and far between, and the absence of agitation, rarer still, permitted them to expand, were hitherto always sure to flourish upon Irish soil. And the love of kindred,* parental and filial affec-

* The following extract from a lecture lately delivered to the divinity students in King's College, London, by one of the professors there, shows the difficulty, to the English mind, of comprehending the intensity of Irish feelings and motives:—"The ship *Avon*, Nicholas Johnson, master, of 1100 tons register, with about six hundred passengers, arrived disabled at Miramichi. She encountered at the outset heavy weather, lost several spars, and suffered in her rigging, which lengthened her voyage; but the violence of the elements sank into insignificance before the turbulent perverseness of the Irish emigrants who formed her freight. The typhus fever spread among them; but still the infatuated beings would not separate themselves from the dead, until the infection rose to such a pitch on board that, frantic with

tion! These, the worst times which Ireland ever experienced could not diminish. To these are due the vast sums continually remitted from America to furnish the means of emigration to other thousands, and pouring in so rapidly as to have excited fears of absolute depopulation. Should the present rate of emigration continue, the Saxon will be too late! The element of labour will have deserted the country.

How is the Irishman to exist without the potato? This, after all, is the question for immediate reply. It may be answered by another. How does it happen that in the north of Ireland the loss of the potato is not attended with starvation? The answer is at hand. The *loom* is there. Manufactures serve in a great degree to render the humbler classes there indepen-

despair, the captain, uniting with the Presbyterian part of the passengers, and a few able hands of the crew still remaining, assailed the unruly in their stronghold, and, giving them regular battle, succeeded in removing them; when, to their horror and dismay, they discovered about sixty dead bodies stowed away in chests, or sewed up in beds! They were consigned to the deep, and followed by many fresh victims, until the majority of the passengers, and all the crew, except two hands, died. This tragical history illustrates the unhappy ignorance and brutal obstinacy of the nation of Celtic savages with whom it is our misfortune to be so closely bound up, &c."—*Medical Times*, September 6th, 1851.

This all-sacrificing love to save the bodies of their friends from what in Ireland is looked upon with superstitious horror,—consignment to the deep,—might have awakened, one would suppose, some feeling of compassion or sympathy. But no! to the lecturer it appeared mere "brutal obstinacy."

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dent of the soil, and so it must be with the Celt if he is to flourish in Ireland. With the potato, he might still contrive to ward off absolute starvation, in spite of poor-rates and free trade; but without it, while without capital and thrown on his own labour alone in the cultivation of the land and on his present knowledge, he cannot even subsist!

How, then, can manufacturing industry be made to penetrate the Celtic recesses of Ireland? It is plain that, in the present state of things, it can only enter by and with the Saxon, and this leads to the consideration of the obstacles to the approach of the latter.

The state of *isolation* in which the Irish Celt has always existed, is that which favours most his antipathies to Saxon civilization; and, viewed in this light, may be considered the chief fountain of all his evils. In the adaptation of remedial measures, therefore, the removal by all possible means of this isolated condition, so hostile in him to all progress, presents itself as a great leading principle to be kept continually uppermost. Left as he is, under Saxon rule, unaided and easily discouraged, the Celt will not improve even in his own way. Show him, *by example*, the value of labour, the necessity of order, the advantages of knowledge, and the comforts of a higher scale of living, and he will be found quick to learn and skilful to perform; and, though always retaining his excitable temperament and peculiar tendencies, his facility in accommo-

dating himself to surrounding circumstances, when the curse of isolation is removed and the strict enforcement of law secured, will effectually adapt him to the enjoyment of true liberty and Saxon modes of civilization and progress.

To break down the barriers, then, with which the Celt is surrounded, and which, while suffered to exist, must preserve in all their integrity the worst tendencies of his race,—is indispensable in the writer's view to the further advancement of that race in Ireland; and this position is submitted here as a great practical principle, clearly deducible from the doctrines of race advanced in the preceding portion of this little work. Some of the means which appear to the writer best suited to the accomplishment of this difficult object will now be shortly considered, under the following heads:—1, Education; 2, The Land Question; 3, Intercourse; 4, The Application of Capital; 5, Waterpower; 6, Preservation of Order.

CHAPTER VI.

EDUCATION.

CONNAUGHT and Munster, the strongholds of the Celtic race, were the last parts of Ireland to receive the English language. Forty years ago, it had made so little progress among the peasantry, that a stranger unacquainted with the Irish tongue would have found it impossible to hold intelligible intercourse, by speech, throughout entire districts of these provinces. Even at the present day, there are many individuals, particularly among the female part of the population, who know no other tongue than their own; and a still greater number, who, though able to converse with tolerable ease in English, prefer for the general purposes of life the use of their native language, and speak it on all occasions in their ordinary communications with each other. Of late years, indeed, the use of the English language has rapidly advanced in the more central districts; and, in the more remote, the necessity of acquiring it is becoming every day more felt by the natives themselves; but, still, generally

speaking, the fluency and force of an Irish peasant's expressions can only be appreciated by those who understand the Irish language, his imperfect knowledge of the other rendering it unsuitable for the ready conveyance of his thoughts. He, therefore, often *thinks* in that language, which has been the vehicle of his earliest impressions, and prefers its use where he can. The isolating effects of this difference of speech, this great barrier to amalgamation, are shown in the traditionary feelings of hostility to the Saxon race, handed down through generations in sounds which excite the native temperament in an extraordinary degree.

But even among the greatly increased numbers in Ireland who now speak the English language fluently, this new attainment cannot be expected to have much effect in introducing more liberal ideas, while intercourse with men of different habits of thought from their own is still so limited. Their views and feelings must still continue the same, whether expressed in one language or the other, while no opportunity is afforded of correcting them by comparison with other standards. The avenues to better knowledge must still remain closed, and the all-powerful engine of the press can avail but little with those to whom, from their deficiency in the first rudiments of education, its most useful productions are truly but sealed books. When the evil effects of this long continued isolation are con-

sidered, in perpetuating ignorance, prejudice, and want of progress, the necessity of obtaining some mode of access to the Celtic mind will appear absolute, and the question of national education will stand forth in its true importance.

Now, although in the *general* legislative management of Ireland by British statesmen, the above great principle is not avowed, nor apparently recognised as the chief object to be held in view, it must be confessed that the government measures in reference to this particular question are admirably adapted to forward the great result. The system of national education in Ireland is one which confers an inestimable boon on present and future generations; and in carrying out this system in the face of great opposition, and (as the writer thinks) of mistaken zeal, the government are deserving of all praise. The rapid progressive increase in the number of schools and pupils, under the superintendence of the Commissioners, demonstrates remarkably the aptitude for instruction existing in the Irish mind, long unhappily suffered to lie uncultivated. The number of pupils in all is now nearly half a million, Connaught and Munster together contributing about 200,000. Such facts as these are calculated to awaken the strongest anticipations of ultimate good, in the opportunity afforded of penetrating the heretofore unapproachable domain of Celtic intellect; and of laying permanently open, for all time, a way of access

to the minds of a people second to none in quickness of apprehension and acuteness of discernment. The rapid success of these schools is due to the excellent quality of the instruction given. The books used contain much useful knowledge, so conveyed in language as to attract, as well as improve, junior understandings; and the great demand for them throughout England, Scotland, Wales, and the colonies, has impressed on them the stamp of public approbation. It is to be hoped that their future progress will equal the past. In their management, however, much will depend on the discrimination exercised in the selection of masters, [this is a point of the highest importance] both with regard to moral principles and to professional capacity. That the latter is already well understood and appreciated, is proved by the success of the Church Education Society's schools, even in the immediate vicinity of those of the national system. One would suppose that no Roman Catholic would allow his children to receive instruction in the former, wherever the latter in point of distance are equally convenient. This is not always the case. The writer is aware of instances where, from the superior character, as to ability, of the masters, the number of pupils, including several of the Roman Catholic creed, attending the Church Education schools far exceeds that attending the neighbouring National schools; the preference shewn by the children of this creed being,

as is well known, *at first* solely due to the superior qualifications of the masters. A competition of this kind is perhaps desirable, and should have the most favourable effects on the progress of all. The emulation excited in the masters will effectually prevent carelessness; and this rivalry in learning (one may at least endeavour to hope) will not lead to those embittered feelings which other grosser rivalries have too often created. It should be mentioned, however, that the instances here alluded to were in a northern county, where intercourse with the Saxon race has very much diminished prejudices against Saxon improvement, until very lately so strong in some other parts of the country; adding another illustration of the principle, that the removal of isolation is the forerunner of Celtic advancement in Ireland.

The superior character of the knowledge imparted in most of these schools is matter of sincere congratulation to all lovers of progress; and if a strict superintendence and a careful selection of masters and books shall be ensured and continued for some years longer, and additional schools erected wherever openings present, a rich soil shall have been prepared in Ireland for the introduction of Saxon enterprise and capital, and for the due appreciation by Irish minds of that industrial assistance, by example and instruction, which the Celt so much requires, and the Saxon is so well qualified to impart.

The commencement of this useful education, in the very lowest strata of society, is a guarantee of the sound basis on which the plans of the legislature were in this instance founded; and it is not to be doubted that, in the course of time, many distinguished specimens of native talent shall be raised from the humblest ranks, and transferred to a position which, but for the opportunities of elementary education now afforded, their most ardent hope could not have anticipated.

The future realization of this hope, we may conclude, will be still further facilitated by the superior courses of instruction given in the three Queen's Colleges now established in Ireland, the progress of which, from the opening in the year 1849 to the present time, has surpassed general expectation. Fierce opposition was also given to these establishments by interested bodies, and uncompromising though probably conscientious zealots; but the force of reason prevailed over senseless clamour, and at the end of the very first session, each college, by its successful debut, vindicated the claims of Celtic Ireland to a fair share of that laudable ambition which aspires to literary distinction.

The Queen's University in Ireland, founded in 1850, is to be considered the highest point in the system of education under the patronage of government. It is in connection with the three Queen's Colleges, being established for the purpose of granting degrees in arts,

medicine, and law, to students who shall have completed their studies in any one of these colleges.

These government institutions, together with the National School system, present valuable agents for the diffusion of knowledge through all ranks of the community; and it is extremely probable that some instances will occur of pupils ascending, by the force of talent, from the lowest to the highest steps, in the gradation of these educational establishments.

But there is still one link wanting. The gulf is wide between the humble and inexpensive National School and the Queen's Colleges; and though it would be by no means desirable to give undue encouragement to the elevation above their proper sphere of mediocre abilities, or to raise ideas in the generality which might unfit them for humbler and more appropriate pursuits, an exception might be made with advantage in favour of highly distinguished promise of future excellence. An intermediate endowed establishment, say one or two at first for all Ireland, in direct connection with and under the management of the Commissioners, to give superior instruction, with board and suitable provision, to a few selected pupils educated in the National Schools, the selection to be made by careful examination, would open to the children of the very lowest classes the possibility, now scarcely to be thought of, of attaining some of the many exhibitions awarded according to merit at entrance in the new colleges, or at least of

applying their natural gifts to many congenial purposes in the middle and humbler walks of life.*

Such an establishment might be expected to awaken many a germ of native talent which otherwise would remain for ever undiscoverable; and by removing a difficulty now almost insurmountable, to infuse a degree of self-respect and self-reliance in many young individuals of a race in which the growth of these qualities requires the strongest encouragement. The links in the chain of educational facilities for Ireland would then be complete; and what a glorious boast for any country to be able to make, that genius, born in a hovel, possessed by indisputable birthright the privilege of acquiring, if it so willed, in spite of the disadvantages of poverty and humble origin, all the benefits of a liberal education—the opportunity, by the exercise of nature's gifts alone, of entering the arena of learning or of the fine arts, on equal terms in this respect with the rich and high-born. This indeed would be a true and legitimate equality, to which none in any rank ought to object; and the privilege being restricted to superior talent, would be the more highly prized by the fortunate candidates, and furnish in a worthy rivalry the best security against its abuse.

* The city of New York “not only offers a free education to every child within her limits, but has organised and established a Free Academy, where any child of ability may receive an education equal to that afforded in the best colleges of the State.”—*Speech of Mr. Raymond.*

In concluding this subject, the writer would say: Educate the people by all possible means; give all facilities to the *honest* efforts of every creed to forward the good work. It is the first step to the removal of isolation, and in no other way can the full power of the press be brought to bear upon the Celtic mind. It may be said that this power may possibly be used by the ill-disposed for purposes far different from those here contemplated. It is so used in Celtic France, where the liberty of the press is in consequence, and of necessity, greatly restricted; and it would be so used in Ireland, if the Celtic spirit there were to be forever shut out from Saxon influence. In the latter country, however, the very progress of education itself will carry with it the antidote to its abuse. The Saxon spirit and the Saxon press are at hand, and their operation will be more and more facilitated by each extension of knowledge.

When education becomes general in Ireland, a great step forward shall have been accomplished; and that lamentable condition of gross ignorance, which at present serves to foster the worst prejudices and to prevent all progress, shall have yielded, and opened a way for the successful introduction of other measures. Above all, much shall have been done to effect the free communication of mind with mind, and to destroy that bane of the Celtic race in Ireland—isolation.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LAND QUESTION.

To those who omit all reference to race, the causes of the present condition of landed property and of land tenure of Ireland are enveloped in so much confusion, that all their attempts to unravel and explain them are found altogether unsatisfactory.

Among the foremost of the difficulties with which the question is incumbered, is that of estimating the amount of evil connected with the conduct of Irish landlords. Odium attaches to the general body. In many instances this odium is deserved. Few are altogether faultless. The personal character, then, of these proprietors, traced back through generations of ancestral misconduct, is supposed by many enquirers to be the chief element among the causes which have produced the present state of things.

But the vices of human nature are to be found in all landlords, as in all other men—in English landlords, as well as in Irish—in the landlords of the north of Ireland, as in those of the west and south. How comes it that the landlords of the Celtic portion of Ireland alone are

the worst and most unfortunate of mortals—the unpitied objects of indiscriminate condemnation?

Cause and effect are here, as usual, confounded. The wider range of the question is overlooked, and proofs of general landlord delinquency are taken as a direct and convincing demonstration, that this delinquency is the “fons et origo” of the mischief; and not, as it is in reality, but an effect itself, a single phase of that general condition which owes its existence to far mightier and deeper causes—causes, the study of which will impel the thinking mind to the conviction, that if all the present landlord-class were now to be removed from Ireland, and if a fresh importation of the best specimens of the same class in England were chosen to supply the places of the first, the same causes still continuing in the same force as hitherto, the certain subsequent degeneration of the newly arrived, or of their posterity, would be but a question of time; and the great truth would at length become apparent, that it is a people themselves, with their system of habits, actions, and modes of life, that impress and mould, and as it were create the relative character of the landlord; while the latter, flowing with the current—subject, like all other men, to the infirmities and open to the temptations of humanity—is to be looked upon as one of the exponents of a pernicious general system, rather than as the agent which has brought that system into being. The explanation will appear as we proceed.

Another alleged source of all Irish evils, much insisted on and amply discussed everywhere, is,—the religion of the Celtic people. This need not detain us here. Belgium, Roman Catholic to the core, supplies the often repeated and never controverted answer. Her very name is, at this moment, associated with ideas of bee-like industry and its best results, abundance and content.*

A third suggested cause, is,—the want of capital.

Is capital, then, never accumulated in Ireland? In many thousand instances it has been. Many a hard-working Celtic Irishman, in times gone by, has realized a competency, say ten or twenty thousand pounds, by honest trade. But how has this capital been applied? What has always been the rule in such cases? Has he extended his business by it, or devoted it to new speculations? Embarked it in commerce? Established manufactures? Reclaimed or improved land as a money speculation? Or has not the rule in these cases been to withdraw from the trading concern; to retire with his capital into private respectability; to eschew trade and traders; to struggle into higher circles; to enjoy while he could, often to dissipate the whole in his lifetime, and leave his family paupers?

* Though the Roman Catholic religion, *per se*, is not incompatible with active industry, *difference* of religion acts unfavourably in another way. It tends to preserve isolation, and thus, indirectly, is a decided obstacle to progress. The influence of pure religion on the morality of a people is a different question, and not introduced here.

Is it wonderful, in a community where this withdrawal of capital from established trading concerns is almost universal, that trade, commerce, manufactures cannot increase; that such concerns should sink against the competition of the larger capitalists abroad; that, in consequence of this competition, every step in advance with the great English or Scotch houses should be a step backwards with Irish ones; that industry should depart and poverty come?*

Is it wonderful that even Saxon families, thinly scattered in Celtic communities, should not struggle long against the all-pervading national spirit, but rather that, as their natural energies are stronger even when wrongly directed, they should at last become "*ipsis Hibernicis Hiberniores*," more Irish than the Irish themselves? The popular contempt for trade, economy, system—the risk of losing caste among equals—above all, the certain loss of respect from the great body of the people, for any line of conduct inconsistent with the popular notions of gentility—were opponents against which individual human nature could not contend. Is it wonderful that the landlords should have been carried into the vortex?

Capital alone, then, can do little good. Men cannot be compelled against their own free wills to apply

* That the *proximity* of a Saxon people has a prejudicial effect on the progress of a Celtic, until a close union takes place between them, is a fact long *felt* in Ireland, though never understood.

it in useful enterprise. The men to use it thus must come with it. England, Scotland, the north of Ireland, the States of America, produce such men in abundance—men whose energies increase with their wealth, and derive new vigour from every extension of business. Saxon capitalists are the men required.

Another presumed obstacle to improvement, the last which shall be noticed here, is—natural indolence on the part of the natives.

This calumny on the race [their conduct abroad disproves it], has arisen probably from contrasting the native want of self-reliance, and consequent unwillingness to employ saved capital in new discoveries or improvements, with the gigantic efforts and restless speculation seen everywhere in the sister country. It is forgotten that this very speculation is often carried into effect through the agency, in large measure, of Irish labour, which may be said in this sense to have made Manchester what it is, and is now generally diffused through the large English towns. In this particular, the race have been much misrepresented.*

To return to the original question, the condition of

* The industry of the females of Ireland, whenever means offered, has been always remarkable, startling as the statement may appear to some. Any one who is old enough to remember the palmy days of the spinning wheel can testify to the fact. The labour was commenced at early dawn, and continued almost without intermission till bed-hour. The present avidity for employment in the sewed muslin work, shown everywhere by the young Connaught females, is another proof

the land as affected by the character of the occupying race. A striking difference between the state of the peasantry in the north, and of those in other parts of Ireland, is obvious at a first inspection, and has long been a subject of general remark. This difference is usually accounted for by the existence of tenant-right in the former. Why has not this tenant-right extended to the rest of Ireland? Would it suit Celtic communities? They are all now, and ever have been, characterized by the same tendencies. The answer will clear up many difficulties.

Land, as we have seen, forms the sole dependence of the Irish Celtic peasant. He throws himself, when he can, entirely on the land for support. Wanting self-reliance, he shrinks from new enterprise, despises trade, is content with little, and loves social enjoyment. If he realises capital, he hoards it, or spends it in a manner little useful to his own or his country's advancement. At the approach of old age, whenever he has the power, he divides his sole means of support among his children, sure himself of a maintenance from their affection. They in their turn act similarly. Each division increases poverty, while each little patch is clung to with increased tenacity in proportion to its inability to yield a comfortable independence. It is an undisputed fact that he *has* lived thus for centuries in Ireland.

It is so also with the French Celt. The entire

number of landed proprietors in France is now about eleven millions, and about one half of these are assessed at less than five francs annually. "A vast number of the properties are under five acres, and the result is a generally mean condition of rural affairs, and the total absence of all high class systematic agriculture." The scale of living is also quite unsuited to Saxon ideas of comfort. Most of this has taken place since the Celt was permitted to follow freely his own subdividing propensities on the soil of France, within a period of about fifty years. The debt due by mortgage on the lands of these small proprietors amounted in 1843 to thirteen milliards, equal to 520 millions sterling.

Subdivision in France, though pregnant with future evils, has answered the immediate purpose intended. The agricultural population have been kept wonderfully quiet, even during the late period of intense excitement; for the Celt, as long as he is left in undisturbed possession of his beloved land, removed from immediate contact with external agitating influences, will, though sunk in poverty, lead a quiet, contented, and cheerful existence. But his poverty will increase with each generation, and at the end of the next half century the internal condition of France will be by no means enviable; unless, as in the north of Ireland, the encouragement of manufactures shall have supplied a means of creating wealth independent of the land.

From Celtic competition, however, as before remarked, the Saxon will have nothing to apprehend.

In the more isolated parts of Celtic Wales, also, subdivision and consequent impoverishment may be seen; but the great advantage which Wales possesses, in its geographical continuity with England, has led to the extension of Saxon enterprise and manufacturing spirit to many parts of the country; and the profitable working out by these means, of its inexhaustible deposits of mineral wealth, has effectually counteracted, in the greater part of the principality, the Celtic tendencies to impoverishment: a useful example in dealing with the same tendencies in Ireland.

The Highlands of Scotland, the stronghold of the Scottish Celts, afford at this moment another melancholy instance of the universality of those tendencies in the race, wheresoever found in an isolated condition. As in Ireland, so in the Highlands, the unenterprising Celt, left to his own shifts, is quite contented with the mere necessities of existence; and finding the potato sufficient to supply these wants, he depends solely on this vegetable for the means of sustaining life, accumulates unproductive capital, (and even that rarely) and divides, when he is allowed, his farm among his children.

From the numerical and political insignificance of these poor people, their sufferings have attracted little public attention; but had their numbers been

greater or their influence for good or evil stronger, we should probably have heard, long since, bitter complaints against Highland landlords for undue severity, and accusations of neglect for not accomplishing impossibilities; for not compelling an improved system of agriculture; for not spending capital in giving constant employment; in short, for not preventing the isolated Celt from following obstinately those propensities which he has inherited from Nature.

The sad history of the Scottish Celt for the last few years, strongly resembles that of his Irish brother. Alike in his dependence on the land, in his want of self-reliance, in his dislike of new industrial enterprise, he sinks under the same causes, and submitting in silent resignation, scarcely makes either a complaint or an effort towards improvement.

In such populations, what can tenant-right avail? None will quit possession willingly, while the scantiest subsistence can be wrung out of the land; and when necessity at length compels the surrender, capital to purchase is generally wanting by the incoming tenant, or cannot be parted with without pauperizing himself.

How has tenant-right been obtained or acknowledged in the north of Ireland? We have seen that the experiment of small holdings has proved successful there, in consequence of the innate characteristics of the men by whom it is practised; that, by the

Saxon, subdivision of land is used as a means to a further end, the small holding serving him as a fixed point from which his expansive industry radiates, and grasps at all means within reach for its active exercise; that these means are supplied freely by the natural, self-confident energy of the Saxon capitalist, who, instead of withdrawing his capital when he has made a competence, uses it to extend his business or embarks it in new speculations, giving increased employment with every accession of wealth; that the Saxon peasant is not satisfied with the mere means of sustaining existence, and therefore that it is only when these opportunities offer for the application of his industry independently of the land, that he will consent to subdivide it into such minute portions as, but for those extraneous sources of profit, would be insufficient for his comfortable support.

We have seen, also, that nowhere does the Saxon exhibit the same attachment to place as the Celt; and that if disappointed in his views in one place, he has little difficulty in leaving it to try fortune in another.

These remarkable features of his race have led to the establishment, in the counties he inhabits, of the social arrangement in question, now so long sanctioned by usage, as almost to be considered in the light of a legal enactment. Its history is briefly this. The ready disposition to change of residence, and loose

attachment to locality, in times when the tenure of land was generally by lease; induced frequent negotiations for the disposal of interests; and, in a country thickly inhabited by a thriving population, agreements were easily effected. The landlords, being usually gainers by the payment of the arrears and rent due, and sometimes by obtaining more wealthy tenants in the place of failing ones, found it their interest to encourage the system, which, thus established, and afterwards continued in cases where leases had expired, is now known as the celebrated tenant-right of Ulster. In the Saxon community of that province, it has been found to work well. It suits the independent feelings and enterprising habits of the people; and as the self-interest of all parties concerned in the agreements is consulted, all are equally satisfied.

From the peaceful origin and amicable relations of this hitherto useful custom, it is perfectly plain that the Saxon framed it to suit his own requirements; that it has been the spontaneous offspring of Saxon tendencies; that, in fact, *the Saxon made tenant-right*, not tenant-right the Saxon as is too generally imagined.

This confounding of cause and effect has led to the very prevalent opinion, that the same system, if applied by a government measure to the rest of Ireland, would be attended with equally favourable results there as in the north. The importance of this opinion, and the present very general feeling in its

favour, will excuse a little further consideration of it, even at the risk of some repetition. If successful legislation is to be attained, and mischievous error avoided on this subject, the leading differences of race must not be disregarded.

What are the benefits expected to accrue by the legal extension of this tenant-right of the Saxon north to the rest of Ireland? The easily satisfied and unenterprising nature of the people leads to complete dependence on the land. Land forms an object of the strongest attachment and competition. With no other resource for support, subdivision of property prevails. Impoverishment follows. The land is still clung to, to the last extremity. All Celtic Ireland supplies illustrations in abundance. When the occupier is thus reduced, the land, neglected and allowed to run out of heart, partakes of his impoverished condition. It is, then, of little immediate value; and before it can be again made remunerative, will require a large outlay from the incoming tenant. What can the tenant-right of the north do here? The interest in the land is really not worth purchase; and if, through competition, the new tenant is induced to part with his little capital privately, as is sometimes done in order to conciliate the good will of the former one, he becomes unable to expend on the impoverished farm what it so much requires, and landlord and tenant are doubly injured.

Thus, natural obstacles have prevented the establishment of tenant-right in the Celtic parts of Ireland. The landlords there would consider themselves fortunate in having the aid of tenant-right, to rid them of bad tenants and get solvent ones in their place, even without the recovery of any arrears. But this cannot be. There is not the will to quit the land while it yields the smallest support; nor, generally, the ability to pay a fine on getting possession. The people themselves feel that this is true; and therefore the late attempts, by a few northern demagogues, to awaken an interest on this question in several of the southern counties, were met with apathy, and proved a complete failure.

How truly these statements correspond with facts, can be best appreciated by those who, from long residence, are familiar with the habits of the Celtic people, and have witnessed the desperate tenacity with which the occupier adheres to the soil, when sunk in arrear and utterly unable to cultivate it efficiently; even then in most instances refusing the recompense frequently offered by the owner, who naturally wishes to avoid law expenses by getting peaceable possession.

The proposal of the tenant-league orators to fix the rent by valuation, at intervals of time, according to the quantity, quality, and price of produce, is quite inapplicable to any free country, and above all to Celtic Ireland. Leaving out of view the interference

with private rights, and the mischief certain to accrue from the periodical revival of disputes, this measure would make it the interest of the tenant to have his land present the most miserable aspect possible, in order to obtain the greatest abatement of rent. It would act, therefore, as a direct premium to negligent husbandry, which unfortunately is already too general. This the league orators appear to have foreseen, and, as a counteracting measure, propose that the tenant on quitting should be recompensed for his improvements.

From this last proposal, in a Saxon community, no doubt, some benefit might be expected. It would probably lead to real improvements, and the landlord's interest would not suffer perhaps, though a door would be opened to many abuses, such as the bribing of arbitrators, false evidence, &c. But to infer from this probability of benefit, that such a measure would be equally adapted to the rest of Ireland, is a certain proof of the utter ignorance of the proposers with regard to Celtic character. The creation of improvements on a farm in such a case would be simply the accumulation and investment of capital. The desire to accumulate and invest would be as essential to the increase of this description of property, as to that of any other.

Has the Celt ever generally exhibited this praiseworthy propensity to provide against the distant future? Is not his present condition a proof to the contrary? Ready money he will and does sometimes accumulate,

to be divided at his death, and frequently squandered; but the enterprise which leads to the investment of capital, with the prospect of a distant return, is strikingly rare in the race; and it may be at least very much doubted whether, in more than a very few scattered instances indeed, the purpose of the projectors of a tenant-compensation measure would be at all answered, were their views fully carried out by the legislature. It may safely be assumed that in the great majority of small holdings no improvement would result; and in these the difficulty of separating land and its occupier would be considerably increased, as the claims to fictitious as well as real improvements would have to be considered and decided before ejectment could take place. Thus, it is to be feared, the measure would but confirm pernicious habits, and render more difficult the advance of general enlightenment.

The difficulty of legislating for Ireland, acknowledged and wondered at by all, but never understood, becomes intelligible when the differences of race are taken into account. It is inexplicable on other principles.

That the same law which works well with one large section of the inhabitants, should be found quite unsuitable to the other portion, appears to those who can see no difference in race, repugnant to common reason and all received notions of impartial legislation. And here lies Ireland's great difficulty. Laws are

made by a Saxon government to suit the Saxon character, and these laws are applied to a Celtic community. The effect is found to be most unsatisfactory, and surprise is expressed that while one great division of the people is advancing at a rapid rate, the other is either retrograding or stationary, or at most advancing by scarcely perceptible degrees.

It is superfluous at the present day to admit that as all live under the same government, and in the same country, such a thing as separate legislation is not to be attempted. On the contrary, all causes which would tend still further to widen the breach, and create distinctions between the two races, should be studiously shunned, and all existing causes of these distinctions should be as far as possible removed. But although laws cannot be made to apply directly to the Celt alone, to the exclusion of the Saxon, much may yet be done by judicious legislation applicable to all alike, but having reference chiefly to Celtic progress; and no measure should be enacted which would have the effect of retarding the improvement of this race in Ireland.

Thus, with regard to the land question, of the proposed measures just considered, though some would probably be conducive to Saxon improvement, none are likely to answer expectation as far as the Celt is concerned, and one or more would act injuriously.

Can the difficulty, then, be overcome? Can any way be discovered of combining in one comprehensive land

measure the interests of both Celt and Saxon? The desideratum is worthy of the highest efforts of the statesman. The writer cannot despair of seeing its accomplishment. The right direction has been already pointed out, by the successful working of the Incumbered Estates Act. Carry out the principle still further. Set the land free. Assimilate, as much as possible, property in land to property of other kind. Throw the land open to the competition of honest industry, by removing all obstacles to its easy transfer *in small allotments*. Let machinery in connection with the court in Dublin be prepared for holding sales (it has been done already in several instances) in any part of the country, on short notice, and at small expense; so that the humble creditor may have equal advantage with the greater in obtaining his just rights. To carry out this measure properly, a large increase would be required in the staff of the Incumbered Estates Court. Business there has already accumulated to an oppressive amount, and the consequent delay in bringing property to sale is beginning to be seriously felt. An extension of the system is necessary. An easy and inexpensive remedy would thus be afforded to the smaller class of creditors, and land would come into the market in lots sufficiently small, to enable the industrious among the lower classes to invest their savings on the most perfect security, free from the uncertainty of prospective valuations, the

great drawback to the working of a tenant compensation measure.

By being thus sold in small allotments, the land *would assuredly rise in value*, from the increased number of competing purchasers, and would gradually pass from the hands of the idle and extravagant to the most deserving members of society. A class of small independent proprietors would rise from the ranks of the hard-working and accumulative. By these the soil would be worked to the best advantage, and their successors, if not equally industrious, would in their turn be obliged to sell to the more provident. Thus, the land instead of being, as it is at present, in the hands of paupers unable to cultivate and unwilling to surrender, would find its way, by the quiet but sure course of law, into the possession of the most thriving portion of the population; and all the benefits of the French system would be secured without its ruinous effects. Mortgages could not accumulate to any great extent. The remedy would lie in the measure proposed.

But of all the advantages which would result from the easy transfer of land in small portions, perhaps the greatest would consist in the breaking down of those local attachments and clannish feelings which are among the chief causes of Celtic isolation, and have hitherto effectually discouraged the approach of Saxon enterprise and civilization. Irish prejudices are still strong, and to remove them thoroughly will be a work

of time and difficulty. The importance, therefore, of every measure which will serve to diminish the interval between the two races must be acknowledged; and viewing in this light the above mentioned plan for the ready sale of land in small allotments, its value will be the better understood.

Thus, to follow out this view, by placing before the thriving artisan and humbler farmer, as the attainable prize of labour and economy, the ultimate possession of a tenement or plot of land free of rent, it would supply strong motives to exertion, and induce habits of continued industry; the more likely to be permanent, as the investment in this case would not, as in the compensation measure of the tenant-league, be dependent on future chances and the caprice of arbitrators. By gradually transferring the possession of land to the hands of the industrious, it would prepare the way for agricultural improvement and the admission of Saxon industry. By diffusing examples of thrift among the ignorant and idle, it would diminish the tendencies to secret conspiracies, and the system of outrage which has so long kept the Saxon out of the country, and so often driven him forth when attempting to settle. In short, by showing that, in land as in any other property, change of ownership would take place in the natural course of things, as a consequence of idleness and extravagance; a more just relation between land and its occupier would be comprehended,

the Irish peasant would become gradually accustomed and reconciled to its easy transfer, and a great obstacle to the introduction of Saxon capital and skill would thus be removed. With the Saxon would come manufactures and commerce; with these, ready markets for agricultural produce; and, above all, employment for surplus population. With employment, the pauper competition for land, as the only resource, would diminish, though its value would increase; the bad effects of subdivision would disappear, and prosperity would be established on a firm basis.

Another beneficial effect of this measure would be the discouragement of the ruinous system of subletting and conacre. Subletting, the worst description of subdivision, has been extremely general in Ireland, and the cause of an infinite amount of distress. A plot of land, from an acre to a rood, or even less in quantity, is let by a tenant, himself scarcely removed from pauperism, to a wretched undertenant, a perfect pauper, at an exorbitant rent, which he takes care to levy to the last farthing. A miserable cabin is erected on this spot of earth, which in process of time becomes filled with a squad of children. The sole support of this crowd of human beings is the potato, except when close to the sea-coast, where shell fish and sea-weed furnish an addition to the scanty meal. This minute subletting is therefore more common near the coast than inland. The prolific qualities and easy culture of

the potato may be considered an *immediate* incentive to the system. Its remote and deeply seated causes have been already explained.

The practice of conacre consists in the hiring out for one or generally for two crops of potatoes, a similar patch of land, often still more minute; and if manured by the owner, as is frequently done, returning him a profit at the rate of eight pounds, ten pounds, or even twelve pounds per acre. No possession is given in this case, and therefore no claim to the land can be established by the planter of the crop. The potatoes remaining after the claims of the owner are satisfied represent the planter's profit—the recompense of the labour expended—and on these, as in the former case, it often happens that a family of parents and children have chiefly or entirely to support existence for the year.

These practices of sub-letting and conacre were so general before the famine, as to render all classes, from the highest to the lowest, dependent on the potato. The sub-tenant and holder of conacre planted. If the crop succeeded, a great part of the price went to the tenant next above, who frequently depended entirely on this for the rent due to his landlord. From the latter it passed to a second landlord; sometimes to a third; each having a certain interest in the land, which it was necessary to satisfy. If the crop failed, the planter starved, or begged till the next season; the

tenant failed in his rent; and the landlord could not meet his often pressing liabilities. Thus the whole chain of society depended on the chances of this single crop, and the result of its failure for successive years was, as might be expected, general embarrassment and ruin.

The system of conacre has been pretty generally swept away with the crop on which its existence depended: there being no title to possession, the land returned to its owner. With the sub-letting system the case was different. The sub-tenant being in possession, and as usual clinging to the land, could only be disturbed by a troublesome legal process, and this for the impoverished superior tenant was often a difficult and expensive proceeding. The landlord frequently decided the question by ejecting all together, and hence the wholesale exterminations latterly so numerous. There are still, however, many properties overrun by this description of sub-tenant, and their condition is of course miserable in the extreme.

Through the failure of the potato, sub-letting has greatly diminished; but, should this plant revive, the impoverished tenant, being unable from his reduced condition to cultivate the entire of the land in his possession, will again resort to sub-letting, and the system will once more become universal, unless some remedy, legislative or otherwise, shall be discovered and promptly applied. Tenant-right can only serve here to

make this state of things permanent, by fixing more securely in possession the pauper sub-tenants. Tenant compensation here can do no good. Improvement is least of all to be expected from such a class. Any interference with the right to enforce rent will only lead to the ejection of these miserable beings, and the land will fall into the hands of the superior tenant, who is at present unable to cultivate what he holds. Such legislative interference will only add to the difficulties intended to be relieved. Certain measures suitable to the present exigency have already been found useful, such as the plan of practical agricultural teaching by local instructors, so creditable to its noble projector, and the Land Improvement and Drainage Acts which have given much employment; but the good effects of these last excellent measures can be but temporary and partial, and the difficulty of finding employment will return.

The ready sale of land in small allotments would doubtless effect a large amount of permanent good, by gradually replacing the pauperised and worthless by the more saving and diligent; but the surplus hands would still remain to be provided for. The true and complete remedy for that condition of the land, which has been produced by the systems of sub-letting and conacre, would be that which would effect the *spontaneous* removal from the land of the surplus population. It should not be imagined, however, that the

population of the country, generally, is at all, or was at any time too great; but there are many rural districts, and those the most distressed, so swallowed up by a local plethora of population, owing to the causes we have mentioned, that it is in vain to expect much improvement until this state of things shall have been remedied. *To employ the loose hands by the establishment of manufactures* is the obvious, as it would be the very best, mode of dealing with this difficulty. A large manufacturing town, growing up in proximity to an over-populated and exhausted district, would soon absorb all superfluous labour; and by the reaction of its prosperity on the country around, would afford the best encouragement to agricultural improvement. Certain and permanent employment would render the starving sub-tenant and holder of conacre independent of the land, and the evils of these systems would be effectually removed without the interference of legislation.

But the establishment of manufactures will be a process of time, and must come from the Saxon. The care of the government should be to remove all existing obstacles, and by all possible means to smooth the way for his approach. Already the value of employment is strikingly shewn in the rapid spread of the sewed or flowered muslin manufacture, as it is called, through the young female part of the population; first commenced in Ulster, and now making its way from

this centre of Irish industry to some of the most thickly inhabited and distressed parts of Celtic Ireland.

This excellent branch of industry, which originated in the Saxon north, is found to return considerable profit to its projectors, and it is on this sound commercial principle* that its benefits are extending. Certain Scotch houses, following it up as a good speculation, have lately sent agents to remote parts of Ireland, and established a regular system of female industrial employment which, in its silent operation, has already effected more real good, both morally and physically, than any compulsory interference with private charity or with tenure of land, or other much lauded panaceas, could ever accomplish. As one instance, among many, of the large amount of labour already in action through this system, it may be mentioned that in a small town in one of the most distressed parts of the county of Donegal, and the district immediately around it, several hundred pounds have been paid weekly during the last year for this description of work; and by it alone the entire population of the barony may be almost said to have been kept alive. One promising feature of the speculation is, that the supply of hands is not nearly equal to the demand. The success of this simple plan points to the true

* The work department of the Belfast Ladies' Association schools in Connaught, commonly called Dr. Edgar's schools, is thus carried on through the competing agencies of several Irish and Scotch houses.

method of dealing with Irish difficulties. From the Saxon, it is plain, must come the "encouragement" which to the prostrate Celt is indispensable. This encouragement must be spontaneously given and spontaneously received. The principle on which its growth depends is the principle of all industrial operations in a free country—mutual benefit to employer and employed. Any speculation which has this principle for its basis, in a country like Ireland where the elements of wealth abound, may be expected to succeed; provided, on the one hand, that the speculator possesses capital and intelligence, and, on the other, that freedom of action is permitted him in the employment of labour and the expenditure of his means. The former requisites are close at hand, in the wealth, skill, and enterprise of the Saxon race in the north of Ireland, in Scotland, and in England, and would long since have flowed in a copious stream over the rich field presented by the rest of Ireland, were it not that the latter requisite to success was deficient:—freedom of action was not permitted.* Dense ignorance, pre-

* Several subscription societies have lately sprung up in Dublin, with the benevolent object of introducing various kinds of light manufacture into remote parts of Ireland. If, by being commenced with sufficient capital and conducted by active paid directors, and well-selected and well-paid agents, they can be speedily made self-supporting, their success may be considered possible. Could the competition of a sufficient number of resident business-loving capitalists be brought to bear on such enterprises, as matters of trade, in a country like

judices deep and long cherished, natural propensities unrestrained by law and stimulated by secret combination, interrupted all attempts at improvement, and too often banished the true friends of Ireland from her shores.

Saxon assistance, then, freely afforded and accepted, must be looked upon as the great essential to the rapid elevation of Ireland. Her natural advantages are confessed. Her climate and soil for certain productions unsurpassed. Her water-power all-sufficient. Her population, though requiring instruction, encouragement, and example, second to none in quickness of comprehension and natural docility. For her deficiencies a ready supplement is at hand. The obstacles to its reception are within herself alone. In the removal of these obstacles, government can effect much: but to ensure for legislation a speedy and complete success, requires a thorough knowledge of the nature of her people. Ignorance on this point has led to perpetual mistakes, an unintelligible clashing of well-intended measures. Her true requirements have been overlooked, while superficial grievances have been magnified into vital causes, and legislated for without benefit. In the approaching session it is probable the same course will Ireland, where materials exist abundantly in the number of unemployed and easily taught young people of both sexes, success would be certain. Human nature is such, that things of this kind, unless based on self-interest, are apt, when novelty wears off, to languish and at last expire from—want of funds.

be pursued. A tenant compensation measure may, perhaps, be considered the panacea. To a few among the better classes this measure might perhaps be serviceable. To the great body of the Celtic people it would be found inapplicable; or, if attended with any results, would serve to retard rather than advance. We may still however hope for better things. Education will do much, and when the veil of ignorance shall have been removed, and the acute native intellect shall have extended its horizon; when the evils of isolation shall have been in some measure counteracted by the spread of knowledge, and by the opening up of remote districts through free communications; we may hope that Saxon enterprise will find its way at last into the heart of the country, and develop there those great resources which nature has so bountifully bestowed. The mode, order, and degree in which these resources should be developed must be left to the judgment of speculators, and will depend of course on the facilities presented by each locality.

But we are now trespassing on a subject not immediately connected with ethnological differences, and therefore foreign to the object of this short treatise. It will be sufficient, therefore, to say that with Saxon aid and encouragement few of the many natural advantages of Ireland would seek this development in vain. Her vast waterpower would be applied to all practicable uses. Commerce, under Saxon auspices,

would occupy her harbours. Improved agriculture would much increase the productiveness of her soil. Demand would create supply. With ready markets and active capital, her deep-sea fisheries would yield much wealth. As her social progress advanced, the artistic genius of the Celt would be drawn forth, and invention would lead the way to further improvements. Schools of design would then flourish. And here it may be remarked, that the establishment lately of several of these schools in Ireland, under patronage of the government, and with the avowed intention of drawing forth the latent talent assumed to exist in the Irish people, is a remarkable instance of tacit assent to the truth of a doctrine which all must feel in some degree, but of which few have as yet any defined notions—that of the permanent differences of race. The fact itself of the establishment of these schools, and the hopes confidently expressed by all of their ultimate distinction, prove the existence of a very general belief that centuries of poverty, neglect, and hard treatment cannot extinguish the transmission of those peculiar tendencies which nature herself has implanted. This belief will assuredly be verified in time; but unreasonable expectation must suffer disappointment. Taste will no doubt be generally cultivated, and shew itself in a thousand ways; but true genius is rare in every country, and is seldom the production of forcing. Its growth is usually spontaneous, and

forces its way against obstacles. Artistic talent is specially rare in the Saxon, and until the mass of the Celtic people shall have been educated and elevated much above their present condition, it is scarcely to be expected that the progress of the fine arts in Ireland shall be distinguished by any very remarkable degree of success.

CHAPTER VIII.

INTERCOURSE.

ON taking a general survey of our globe, and the distribution of the human creation on its surface, the close relation, as to position, of those countries which contain all the civilized nations of the old world cannot fail to strike one as remarkable. The influence of this contiguity, eventually, on the progress of those nations towards civilization, and on their general participation in improvement, can be easily understood; and wonder is perhaps excited, first, that the period of barbarism should have had so long duration, and, next, that after the nations had begun to emerge from it, their progress should have been so long retarded.

What, it may naturally be asked, prevented the more rapid spread of civilization in early ages? What has given it so great an impulse in later times? What in our own times has caused the present great struggle for liberty in the great European masses, so long the passive uncomplaining subjects of despotic governments? The answer is plain. The wonderful progress of mind in Europe of late years is chiefly due to

increased facilities of intercommunication. The slowness of the spread of civilization in earlier times was mainly owing to the want of those facilities. The communication of mind with mind—the free interchange of opinion—simplified as were the means of effecting it, by the discovery of the art of printing, advanced slowly among the countries of Europe, notwithstanding their uninterrupted continental connexion, in consequence of the many impediments in the way of transit by land, and the tediousness and difficulty of the navigation of former times.

Civilization continued to advance, however, with each improvement in the means of intercourse, but it was not till the great discovery of modern times that it received its mighty impulse. The locomotive power of steam may in truth be considered the great subordinate agent by which the minds of men have so rapidly acquired that amount of intelligence, which refuses any longer to yield a blind obedience to the despotic authority of ancient dynasties. The relative position of the countries of Europe has thus been signally favourable to the extension of knowledge, through the indirect agency of this great improvement in locomotion. The same geographical connection has again been called on to lend its aid, in the development of a still more marvellous scientific conquest, an infinitely more rapid vehicle for the conveyance of thought. The fretful space which separates England from the mainland now no

longer insulates her communications. The electric telegraph has annihilated time and space, and England has already been placed in conversational propinquity to continental cities, as sooner or later she will be to all the rest of Europe. What the effects may yet be of such intimate relations with the greater part of the whole civilized world, one can only conjecture. It is to be hoped that they may prove in a high degree favourable to the further extension of intelligence, the preservation of peace, and the promotion of general interests; especially when the, at present transitional, state of the nations shall have assumed a permanent phase, and judicious reforms, conceded or extorted, shall have given assurance of future contentment. Should such a consummation be effected, it is not to be doubted that England, from her great commercial and political importance, will become a point of convergence to telegraphic lines from every part of Europe; that her mercantile transactions will be carried on with vastly increased speed and much less uncertainty; that her high standing with reference to the nations of the old world will be raised higher still; and that her ability to compete with foreign industry will be more than ever distinguished.

But there is also, a second great portion of our globe's inhabitants, advancing with giant strides in the race of civilization, whose progress bids fair to eclipse the most strenuous efforts of the first. Young

America has already pointed out to the nations of old Europe the road to freedom, and the true basis of legitimate power. Her institutions, founded in the hearts of her people, being suited to their requirements, have the essential element which ensures permanence, and her commercial intercourse, with all the vigour of maturity, has extended itself over the known world. In a short time, the communications of that country with Europe will be characterised by a rapidity as great and a frequency as certain as the powers of science and the expenditure of wealth can render possible; and it cannot be thought beyond the bounds of probability to suppose, that whatsoever point of the old world shall be selected and eventually found suitable for the transit of the postal and passenger traffic of America, that point shall derive large profit, and if able to appropriate it, incalculable advantage; that an impulse will be communicated, and opportunities afforded, which inertness alone on the side of the inhabitants can render unavailing.

Now, in the selection of such a point of intercommunication, the great objects to be secured are, speed and certainty. The value of time increases with the world's progress. A few hours are now of more consequence in the passage to and from America, than as many days a few years since; and the period may yet arrive when minutes shall enter into calculation. The value of certainty also in mercantile affairs need not be insisted on.

How are the utmost saving of time and the nearest approach to certainty to be attained? All, but the interested, will answer, by having as much of the journey as possible performed on land, and as little of it as possible performed on sea. Steam, too, has rendered applicable, in the navigation of the deep sea, the mathematical axiom that a right line is the shortest between two given points; and if speed and certainty are to be the first considerations in the settlement of this great question, then beyond all doubt the points of contact between the old and new worlds, the *têtes* of the great Atlantic steam bridge, will be those which nature's masonry presents, Nova Scotia and Ireland. The establishment of steam communication between these two points, when the telegraphic lines shall have been perfected between England and the rest of Europe, will unquestionably afford the speediest possible transmission of advices from the far west to all European merchants. The safety of the passage to a port in Ireland, when compared with the risks of channel navigation at night or in foggy or stormy weather, can be only disputed by the ill-informed or insincere; but the light in which the main question is to be viewed here is, as to the amount of improvement which, in the event of such selection by America, the Irish people would be likely to receive.

It is unquestionable that the great advance made of late years in the intelligence of the masses throughout

the world is chiefly due to increased facilities of communication consequent on locomotive inventions. It is equally plain that one vast obstacle to improvement in Ireland is, the isolated condition of the largest section of her inhabitants. [Why it is that isolation is peculiarly inimical to Irish progress has been sufficiently dwelt upon in a former part of this work]. These facts point to the remedial principle; the removal of this condition by all possible means. And what means more likely to promote this grand object, than the free intercourse of Europe and America through the centre of Ireland! To make Ireland at once the focus of communication between the east and west—to exhibit to her wondering gaze the mighty results of commercial industry—to bring her ignorant and neglected hordes into contact with the civilization and enterprise of the world—to awaken her self-interest in the strongest manner to the advantages of order and the arts of peace—to give that encouragement which the nature of the race requires to the establishment of manufactures and the profitable employment of capital! These, among others, there can be little doubt, would be the speedy results of this great project, if favoured by the influence and assisted by the capital of Englishmen, even though the English government, prompted by great commercial interests, should still interpose vexatious difficulties and delays. Apprehensions are naturally excited by the remembrance of former indications

of jealousy towards the weaker sister; but it is to be expected that a wiser policy may soon prevail. If a goodly number of the Saxon race were now located in the west of Ireland, as they are in the north, the point of securing the mail conveyance, would have been won long since, in spite of all opposition; and even as it is, the influence of Belfast, whose interests are of all the most concerned, weighs heavily on the Irish side of the balance. Should this vital question be decided, (as eventually it must be, however opposed) in favour of the Irish port, the Manchester of Ireland will have its Liverpool at Galway, should that port be found to answer; and great advantages to the future manufacturing industry of Ireland will be secured.

It will be seen that the foregoing observations as to the advantages certain to accrue to Ireland, are made on the supposition of her remaining in permanent connexion with Great Britain. This point, though one of vast political importance, does not appear, amidst all the excitement of universal discussion, to have received any notice whatsoever. No more enduring bond can well be conceived, than that which would be created between the two countries by making Ireland the highway of nations in connexion with England. On this connexion would then depend Ireland's direct communication with all the world. Destroy this connexion, and these communications would be utterly cut off. Ireland herself would be thrown out of sight and

out of mind. The current of civilization would sweep by, and leave her "on the other side," unnoticed or despised. Preserve the connexion, and the picture is reversed. Her strongest interests would then lie in the closest union with England—an union which would be thus fixed on the firmest possible basis; and its repeal would be for ever impossible. The amity and protection of England would be the mainstays of Ireland's prosperity. Her hostility would be utterly ruinous.

The railroad and the steam-packet are the sure pioneers of civilization. Steam, applied to locomotive purposes, exercises a moral agency not less astonishing than its wealth-creating power when applied to the processes of industry. In both aspects, its value to Ireland will be incalculable. The railroad and the steam-packet, if not obstructed by opposing interests, will do that speedily for Ireland, which otherwise it might take centuries to accomplish. The question, therefore, of the American packet-station is of really more vital importance to Irish welfare, than almost any other that can be imagined. If any single scheme for the improvement of Ireland were to be selected, as that best adapted to meet her greatest necessities, to fulfil in a measure almost all her requirements, to destroy isolation, to enrich her impoverished people, to open a way for the approach of industry and enterprise,—that scheme would assuredly be the fixing at one of her western ports the European terminus of the great Atlantic ferry. Her long-neglect-

ed natural advantages, thrown open to the world's view, by the concentration to her shores of the passenger traffic of Europe and America, consisting of the most intelligent and enterprising classes in the world, would, after a time, receive at last an attention and appreciation that could not but lead to their speedy development. The annual outlay from passengers alone may be calculated at a sum of no small importance to a distressed country. New lines of railway, branching from the main trunk, would open up new markets, and invite speculation in ways unthought of before. Employment would be largely increased. With growing intelligence, and a consciousness of mutual advantage, prejudice would diminish. Judicious legislation, relative to the land question and the preservation of peace, would further remove obstructions and encourage improvement.

Direct communication with America would rapidly elevate the manufacturing and commercial importance of the northern counties. Belfast would soon outstrip most competitors, and become one, at least, of the richest and most populous towns in the United Kingdom, the great mart for the produce of the north and west, and the receptacle for surplus labour. Saxon capital would gradually feel its way into the rest of Ireland. Favourable sites for manufacturing establishments would be selected, and form the nuclei of future flourishing towns. Saxon tendencies would soon improve and occupy the many spacious harbours now almost

deserted, and Ireland would at last become, what she ought long ago to have been, eminently manufacturing and commercial.

Much may be done, in the mean time, by the opening up of remote parts of the country through railway lines, or even by good common roads, and also by the improvement of harbours. The province of Connaught seems still without the pale. The great tract northward from the Galway line, including the district of Connemara, with the counties of Mayo, Sligo, and Leitrim, is not likely, unless times improve quickly, to enjoy the benefit of a single line of railroad for many years. A great difficulty experienced by the Connaught farmer, in many parts of that province, is that of obtaining a market for his produce, unless at an expense of carriage, which, in these free trade times, materially cuts down his very slender profits. Government evinces a disposition to favour local efforts, but in a part of the country so depressed as this has been, by a long succession of famine years, much exertion cannot be expected. The sea fisheries also on this coast would become, if well worked, extremely valuable. Much has been said of the supineness of the inhabitants in leaving this mine of wealth almost untouched, except for the purposes of food for the immediate neighbourhood; but the difficulty of sale should also be taken into consideration. The disheartening sight of fish rotting on the shores, with no purchasers, and

no salt to cure them, is surely enough to repress all fishing enterprise on a large scale by poor Irish fishermen. With such facilities as a regular steam conveyance would afford, the requisite encouragement would be given to both fisherman and trader; the approach of active speculators would be, at least, invited; and the profitable employment of hundreds on the coast might soon be expected.

This favourable change, in fact, has already taken place in the case of the poor Welsh fishermen, from similar encouragement. A late account says, "The Chester and Holyhead railroad, by affording a speedy communication between the shores and ports of north Wales and the great inland towns of England, has caused great activity in the fishing trade, and has wonderfully promoted the prosperity of hundreds of poor fishermen and their families, along the coast from Anglesea and Caernarvon. During the period from August to December, there have been sent off from Conway alone, to Manchester and its environs, no less than 630 tons of fish, which have produced ample remuneration to the poor people who collected them, and good profit to the railway besides. This is exclusive of large quantities which have been forwarded to Chester and Liverpool. The whole of the vast supply caught in the bays of Caernarvon, Cardigan, Red-wharf, and Conway can now find a market, and the result is highly favourable to industry and increase of comfort

among the poorer classes on the coast." It may be reasonably concluded that steam conveyance, regularly established, would create similar pictures of prosperity among the poor Irish fishermen of the west, and increase immensely the number of boats and men engaged in this branch of industry.

It is not, indeed, to be expected that government will expend money in making railways in Ireland for the sole purpose of providing markets for the hard-working poor; but the improvement of harbours ought at least to be their special care, wherever obstacles to the safe approach of steam-vessels will admit of easy removal. The encouragement absolutely necessary to the success of Irish deep-sea fishing is, *a ready market* for the produce. Without this, fishing piers and boat building and the providing of nets will be of little service. Men, especially Irishmen of the west, will not embark in this uncertain occupation, with the probability that even if successful in their dangerous toil, their produce may be lost for want of purchasers, or that if cured its sale may be deferred for an indefinite period. Speculations in which the prospect of gain is distant and uncertain, will not be generally undertaken in this part of the country, and obstacles are still in the way of those who are willing and able to supply the essentials to success,—energy, perseverance, and capital.

Much disappointment appears to be felt just now by

the friends and promoters of Irish sea-fishing, in the want of enterprise, seemingly discovered for the first time, of the fishermen on this coast. A little better acquaintance with Celtic qualities would have saved much of this disappointment, and would have indicated, in the nature and extent of the encouragement required, the true path to Irish advancement. The late Lord George Bentinck's proposed measure to expend sixteen millions of the public money in Irish railroads, would have been at once the most direct and efficient means, not only for the chief purpose then intended, the relief of famine, but also for the rapid promotion of all future industrial operations along the coasts as well as inland. By a few lines opening towards the remote western harbours, to be completed afterwards if necessary, and extended by private enterprise, the best fisheries of Ireland would have received the same impulse which those of North Wales are now enjoying from the Chester and Holyhead line, and to which, as we have seen, they have most eagerly and successfully responded. There is every reason to suppose that in Ireland the result, in a little time, would have been somewhat similar, though perhaps at first less in degree. Parliament hesitated on account of the expense, and though none could deny the sagacity of the noble proposer in drawing forth into the clearest light one of the great requirements of Ireland, and the best means to supply it; mammon was suffered to interpose, and

check the liberal spirit of England; and the measure was lost—but by a small majority. Time, however, will work changes, and with the American packet-station in its natural position—the extreme west—and the gradual expansion of Saxon capital towards that quarter, private enterprise will be certain in the end to accomplish that which a perhaps mistaken spirit of economy, if not a less amiable feeling, refused, at the cost of an enormous subsequent loss of population to the country, by self-expatriation, or disappearance from other causes.

CHAPTER IX.

THE APPLICATION OF CAPITAL.

How does capital increase in Saxon communities? The reply is to be found at large in former chapters. The Saxon man, (an individual instance being here taken as the representative of a large proportion of the race) by nature self-reliant, labour-loving, energetic, methodical, collects, often from small beginnings, the savings of his honest industry. Each little addition gives power: his business thrives. Inclination, that is, nature, urges him onward: his business extends; he gives employment. He values time, weighs probabilities, calculates losses, ascertains his profits: capital accumulates; he employs more hands. Often, by long years of patient continuous industry; sometimes, more quickly, by bold strokes in speculation; now and then, by steadily working out valuable improvements in mechanism; rarely by original invention; he realizes a competency. *Does he now retire to enjoy it?* Two paths are open before him. He is independent. To choose rests with himself alone: but

on this choice the welfare of nations hangs. On this single point—the *issue of his voluntary selection*—may be said to depend, the wealth, power, and splendour of England—the rapid growth, expanding trade, and gigantic undertakings of America—the commercial importance and general prosperity of all Saxon countries; some, of course, more or less retarded by political, geographical, or other relations, but all possessing the elements conducive to steady progress, love of independence, love of order, strong resolution, commercial spirit, expansive character. Onward, is ever the Saxon's motto. To the past he only looks for experience. Immense fortunes are created: the thirst for enterprise seems only to increase, and capital circulates accordingly in the larger employment of the masses.

The question is not here as to the amount of happiness enjoyed by the capitalist himself, in consequence of all this prosperity. It may be that the social, contented Celt has really more unmixed enjoyment, when possessing what to himself appears a sufficiency; but his are not the qualities to enrich a country, to raise the condition of the multitude, to promote general advancement. Nature has fitted the Saxon for the destiny assigned him, and rest from work is to him intolerable. He accordingly holds the front rank in the march of improvement, and influences more than any other race the civilization of the

world. Take the Saxon out of Europe at this moment, and what events would be sure to follow? The instant combination of despotic powers against liberty, the interruption of free intercourse between nations, the enforcement of arbitrary decrees by the bayonet, further restrictions or extinction of the press, the withdrawal of knowledge, the retrogradation of succeeding generations, and the disappearance of liberty for ages; or—sanguinary retaliations, successful revolutions, anarchical interregna, remodelling of nations, and insane attempts to establish pure democratic constitutions in communities as yet (with few exceptions) unfitted to receive them. But this is a digression.

The Celt, also, will labour hard for a maintenance, and many will rise to independence or a handsome competence. At this point, he also is free to make his choice. Hitherto his way has been that of the Saxon, though his progress is less stimulated by the onward impulse: henceforth, (we speak of the *rule* in both cases) they diverge. The Celt chooses the flowery path; he withdraws his capital, and leaves the drudgery of trade to those whom necessity compels still to labour. Want of self-reliance, and consequent dislike to large speculation, combined with his love of social ease and contentedness with a sufficiency for present enjoyment, (nature still!) determine his voluntary preference. Hence trade cannot extend, wealth cannot flow in, employment of labour cannot increase,

to any very remarkable amount, in Celtic communities ; especially when these, *by proximity of situation*, are driven to contend against Saxon accumulativeness and expansibility.

As long as Saxon competition kept aloof, the Irish trader could get on tolerably well in his own way. In the days of sailing vessels and Irish parliaments, many fortunes were realized by business in Dublin. Social enjoyment, often extravagant, was the order of the day. The respectability of private life was the great object of attainment. The native spirit extended to all.* The trading capitalist retired, or if not himself, his children or successors. Business was not pushed when the opportunity offered, and when, with improved means of intercourse, the pressure of competition gradually became felt, capital was found wanting to withstand it. The Dublin trader, with small means, could not contend with the overpowering perseverance and wealth of the English capitalist or Scotch company, and as each advance of locomotive facilities brought increased competition, the condition of the small shops became proportionally depressed.

* One class of men, chiefly or altogether Saxon, the members of the Society of Friends, have been exempted by their peculiar principles from the action of this national spirit. The causes of this exemption are obvious, as are also its consequences. They are at present among the very few successful opponents in trade of the large English and Scotch capitalists, and are generally distinguished by many unmistakably Saxon tendencies. See page 80 of the present work.

What is the Dublin shopkeeper now to do? To contend successfully with such odds is impossible: the struggle must end in his utter discomfiture. His strength lies in union. Let him unite, and that speedily; but let him unite *with*—not *against*—the Saxon. Let a number of small traders club together their whole wealth. Let them invite the English or Scotch capitalist of character, accustomed to great undertakings, and anxious for any favourable opening. Let the shares be apportioned according to the means invested. Let them engage, each to bring his utmost influence and devote his best attention to the new monster establishment. Let the accounts be subject to fair but not vexatious scrutiny. In all other respects, let the wealthy and well qualified stranger have the chief if not the sole management of the concern. Let pride be cast aside. Let the country-house, and the horse, and the vehicle be dispensed with, at least for a time. Let all who choose to work as subordinates be paid accordingly. Let the discontented be permitted to dispose of their shares. Who can doubt that with such incentives to co-operation and security against disunion, the new establishment would be found to work well?

But before any great willingness to embark in such enterprises can be expected here, the interference of the legislature on one very important point, equally affecting the application of capital to every sort of

industrial speculation throughout Ireland, is indispensable. The law of partnership must be amended.

In England great results have been obtained by the concentration of the wealth and energies of several individuals on a common object, through joint stock societies or partnerships; but as, by the law as it stands at present, each partner, in the case of failure, is separately responsible for the whole liabilities of the company (except in special cases), few associations of this kind are likely to be formed in Ireland, unless the strongest guarantees can be given against future claims, and also unless the business engaged in shall be tolerably free from the risks of untoward contingencies. Of these two requisites, the latter is supposed to be rarely attainable in Ireland; and the effect of the supposition, whether it be well founded or not, is to check even English enterprise when setting towards this country. Most men will hesitate to take shares in any trading association, whose business is to be carried on in a country where property is said to be not much respected, and where, therefore, without any means of foreseeing or guarding against sudden casualty, each partner may find himself at once involved in all the losses and liabilities of a ruined concern.

The protection of the creditor is of course intended by the present law, but in other countries such protection is not found necessary. In France the law is

different, and answers well. There, the special or sleeping partner, who advances capital, is, unlike the general or active partner, totally irresponsible in case of bankruptcy, except for the amount of his share invested. Fraud is guarded against by a provision, that each company, with the names and shares of all the partners, shall be inserted in a public register. The result of the law is, that the French capitalist, as his risk cannot exceed the amount of the sum advanced, willingly places his money in the hands of the trader, receiving in return a share of the profits, that is, becoming a partner in the business.

The law of limited partnerships is also found to work well in America. There are factories there, in which the working men themselves enjoy a partnership, their labour being considered as capital invested, and the flourishing condition of these establishments shews the great advantages derivable from the system. A direct interest in the profits of the concern is the best security for the industry of the workman, and the guarantee which the law affords to the monied partner against greater losses than he can calculate on beforehand, stimulates to the profitable employment of much wealth that otherwise might be comparatively unproductive.

Much has been written of the beneficial effects of this system both in France and America; but it is in its applicability to Ireland that we are here interested,

and the circumstances of this country are exactly such as to warrant the belief that it would be in a special manner useful at the present time, in inviting the approach of that capital and skill which are now so much required; and that hereafter it would have the best effect in supplying that strong inducement to Irish nature, so necessary for the employment of Irish savings in enterprises attended with risk.

The country is now, from long famine and heavy poor-rates, though beginning to recover, still thoroughly impoverished, and, from want of capital, but far more from want of energy and skill to use it, quite incapable of any great unsupported efforts. Should the Security for Advances Bill of last session be at length pressed forward, and passed into law, it is highly probable that English money to a large amount will seek investment in Irish land, which will then afford the best security, the claim of the investor being the first charge on the estate. English money, once introduced largely, will attract its owner's regards to the capabilities of the country. But, under the present law of unlimited partnership, there will still probably remain much hesitation to embark in Irish speculations. Apprehension of unforeseen and undefined dangers will still deter from the formation of companies for great undertakings, such as large manufacturing establishments; and it is just here that a change in the law alluded to might be expected to act

most favourably. If the risk were diminished to the amount of the sum subscribed, hundreds would be willing to venture small sums in any new investment which might offer reasonable hope of success. A beginning once made, there would be little doubt of the result. In process of time savings would again accumulate, as before the famine, in the hands of the more industrious of the working classes. These men, if once induced, by example and the facilities afforded, to invest their little wealth in the purchase of shares, would secure in the most effectual manner the stability of whatever establishment they might belong to. Union would lend strength and spirit to their further efforts. The prospect of a share, as the result of industry, like the sale of land in small allotments, would supply the necessary encouragement to exertion, and a direct interest in the profits would completely neutralize the worst attempts of agitation and secret societies.

CHAPTER X.

WATER-POWER.*

ON the question of the advantages of water-power is based that of the manufacturing capabilities of the greater part of Ireland. Its importance, therefore, is extreme. It is absurd to expect that the more unfavourably situated parts of Ireland will ever attempt, by the importation and land-carriage of coal, to compete with a country whose factories are close to the sources of supply. It is true that Belfast has succeeded by the large use of steam; but the indomitable energy which has forced this town forward, in spite of all its many difficulties, is manifestly due to the inherent qualities of the race to which the mass of its population belongs. To expect that in the more remote parts of Ireland, where these difficulties are still greater, and the easily contented, easily discouraged, spirit of the Celtic race prevails universally, manufactures can ever be estab-

* The subject of this chapter is considered admissible here, as being in the writer's view inseparably connected with Celtic progress in Ireland.

lished without the free and full utilization of the great water-power of the country, is to realise the fable of the countryman at the current's edge. The spontaneous rise of manufactures requiring mechanical power in such parts of Ireland, is possible only through the agency of water. Water-power is the great gift of nature to Ireland, and by it her manufacturing industry must, if it is ever to become general, be mainly developed.

A prejudice, however, exists in England against the *exclusive* use of water for manufacturing purposes, even in favourable situations; and this, among other obstacles, has had no little influence in hindering the application of English capital to Irish speculations. The scarcity of favourably circumstanced water-power in England, and the easy substitution there of steam from the cheapness of coal, seem to have led to fallacious ideas respecting the merits and economy of the former. It is supposed by those little acquainted with water-power, that the steady uniform motion necessary for delicate work cannot be obtained from it; and though its cost, generally, is asserted to be not more than one-tenth that of steam, the truth of the assertion is not considered worth ascertaining, when the means of testing its value do not present in their own localities. These persons affect to look upon the cost of power in extensive factories as of minor importance. It is thus not uncommon to hear English travellers, from the great

manufacturing districts, speak with great contempt of this part of Ireland's resources, and intimate that the want of coal in convenient situations, even were capital and skill equal, must for ever effectually prevent all competition with the English establishments. The writer has frequently, even of late, heard this objection put forward by manufacturing natives of England, from whose intelligence on most subjects one would have expected a closer acquaintance with great mechanical facts. It is, in part, practically refuted, however strongly urged in language, by the use made of water-power in England wherever found available. In Lancashire, where coal is so abundant, advantage is taken of every favourable situation; and the river Irwell, passing by Manchester, is the most highly economised stream in the world. By the factory returns of 1850, out of a total of 91,610 horse-power employed in the factories of England and Wales, there were 18,214 of water-power or one-fifth of the whole; and in Lancashire alone, upwards of 4,000. So large an amount as this would certainly not be employed in a country so well supplied with the means of obtaining the cheapest steam-power, if it be true either that water-power is inherently objectionable for use in factories, or that the cost of steam is too trifling to be taken into calculation. The advantage and efficiency, for mechanical purposes, of the Shaw's water-works near Greenock, need but to be mentioned; and all practical men who have used both

powers skilfully and without prejudice, will admit that it requires only a larger experience of the smooth and regular action of water on good machinery, to dispel completely this extraordinary popular delusion.

The water-power of Ireland is, in truth, one of her greatest natural advantages; but it is a lamentable fact that, with a very few exceptions, it has hitherto been utterly neglected. The Upper Bann is the only large river in Ireland which has been made to yield its power extensively to the claims of industry; and the results are strikingly evident in the pictures of prosperity displayed everywhere along its banks. The greater number by far are allowed to waste their treasures, without an attempt to appropriate any of this profuse natural supply of force, which thus runs idly to the sea. Examples rise on every side. "After the Shannon at Killybegs, there is nothing in Ireland comparable, as a source of mechanical power, to the Erne at Belleek and Ballyshannon."* The Erne lake, which extends from south to north thirty-five miles, at an elevation of one hundred and thirty-eight feet above the sea, at high-water of spring tides, discharges the entire body of its waters by this sole outlet, the river Erne, which meets the tide at the port of Ballyshannon, distant about five miles from its commencement. Two magnificent cascades form the boundaries of its upper and lower extremities, and the intervening space is occupied for a great part by a long

* Sir R. Kane, "The Industrial Resources of Ireland."

chain of rapids. Throughout this course it would be highly available, at almost every point, for the purposes of the heaviest and most extensive machinery; and by the adaptation of the usual economical appliances for distribution, an amount of power might be obtained from this river alone, sufficient to communicate motion to the whole machinery of England. In advantages as a site for manufacture, perhaps no outlet in the United Kingdom can surpass this: few can compete with it. An ample supply of water in the driest seasons—a descent sufficient for all purposes in which water-power is desired—a large population most anxious for employment—a port on which some thousands have been not long since expended, many feet of solid rock having been removed from the entrance, and the passage rendered safe for steam or sailing vessels of tolerable size. A further facility to sea communication is presented by the position, at the distance of a few miles on the northern coast of Donegal bay, of the noble harbour of Killybegs, not surpassed by any in the kingdom for space, depth, and security. Vessels of the largest tonnage might enter here in the roughest weather, and ride within in safety. A small steamer, stationed here as a tug, would save all delay from contrary winds to sailing vessels bound for Ballyshannon.

For the flax manufacture, the soil of the surrounding country is peculiarly calculated to furnish the finest material. Some specimens of the greatest delicacy of

fibre have been raised on the shores of Lough Erne, without any extraordinary attention to the culture; and the alluvial tracts lately uncovered by drainage along the shores of the upper lake will probably be found equally favourable in yielding the finer qualities. In short, a combination of advantages exists in this particular locality, which requires only enterprise, capital and knowledge to render it a great manufacturing centre—the competitor and fully the equal of Belfast. How has this splendid river been used? Throughout its entire course, the only piece of mechanism acted upon by this great body of water consists of one solitary mill-wheel belonging to the distillery of Ballyshannon. The town and its neighbourhood present an aspect of stagnation and poverty. In point of superabundant bounty on the part of nature, and utter neglect of this on the part of man, no civilized country can show a more saddening example.

With such an opening for remunerative speculation, it has often excited surprise that English enterprise and capital have not yet made their way to this locality. Moral causes have had their effect here as elsewhere; but, leaving these aside, the objection to water-power before mentioned appears to have had the chief influence. A distrust of other power than steam, naturally raises, when the latter is unattainable except at great cost, an effectual bar to the expenditure of large capital on the exclusive trial of a power which

strong prejudice still considers at least uncertain and unsteady. There is, no doubt, very sufficient ground for this objection, in those situations where the supply of water is at certain seasons inadequate, and, at others, from the want of proper appliances, excessive, so that a risk must be incurred of a frequent stoppage of all work, to the great loss, perhaps ruin, of the proprietors, and distress of the workmen thrown out of employment; but in such localities as this at the mouth of the Erne, these untoward circumstances could not occur. Want of sufficient supply could never be felt here, as the great reservoir of the lake would always ensure abundant power at its only outlet: and as to difficulties from excessive supply, these would be checked by the same provision, and never could become so great as not to admit of being easily overcome by a little engineering contrivance. In the factories of Portlaw, in the county of Waterford, the river being unprovided with a reservoir, any interruption to the work from want of supply is obviated by the union of steam-power with water-power—by “having also a steam-engine of such power as to be supplemental to the water-wheel, and according as water fails, to work the engine so that the mechanical force exerted by the steam-engine and water-engine together may be constant.”* “In these factories two engines of a hundred horse power and

* Sir R. Kane “Industrial Resources.”

two overshot wheels of nearly equal force thus work together. There is no mechanical difficulty in the co-adaptation of these prime movers."* On the upper Bann this disadvantage of water-power has been effectually removed, by the construction of reservoirs. In the instance before us, the Erne outlet, a reservoir of vast extent, has been provided by nature.

The establishment, on some site as favourably circumstanced as that we have been describing, of a large cotton or flax factory, (or a union of both) erected with the best engineering skill, so that all difficulties might be completely obviated, and worked exclusively by water-power, so that the full capabilities of this power might be thus tested and demonstrated beyond cavil, would go far to diminish or remove this injurious prejudice; and any capitalist or company who would have the courage to undertake such a speculation, and the energy to carry it to completion, would place Ireland under an obligation of gratitude which would extend to future generations, and reap besides the more satisfactory reward of Saxon enterprise, substantial profit.†

* Sir R. Kane, "Industrial Resources."

† The commencement of a new state of things may shortly be expected in the abovementioned locality, through the liberality and persevering efforts of the present youthful proprietor, already a promising member of the legislature, and evidencing in the present instance, as it appears to the writer, a knowledge of the real wants of Ireland. The two first steps resolved upon show the correctness of his views—first, the opening of the port by steam navigation; and next, the introduction of manufacture from the fountain head, Manchester.

The capital and skill requisite for such undertakings are not to be looked for in Celtic Ireland. Neither, at present, has existence there—at least, they are not to be found in combination. They must come from Saxon hands—from the north of Ireland, from Scotland, or from England. Favourable sites and internal natural resources there are in abundance, with a population most apt to learn and now anxious for employment. The means by which these rich unemployed materials may be converted into profitable manufacturing concerns, are still external to the greater portion of the country. Every obstacle, therefore, to their speedy approach should be as far as possible removed, and every facility of access should be afforded.

NOTE.—In the foregoing chapter the writer has but expressed the opinions of many persons professionally competent to offer them on subjects of a mechanical nature, such as the above. The extreme importance of manufacture to the further improvement of Ireland is generally acknowledged, and must cause even the nonprofessional to consider anxiously all possible means for its introduction.

CHAPTER XI.

PRESERVATION OF ORDER.

THE hesitation usually manifested in England in approaching the all-important question of race, when bearing on *deficiencies* of character, does not appear to be at all exhibited when favourable traits are the subject of enquiry or encomium. Thus, at a late social meeting in one of the great English manufacturing towns, the American minister in his excellent speech dwelt at much length on the wonderful progress of the great American Union, as being due to certain innate qualities well known as appertaining to the Saxon race, wheresoever found, whether in England or in America—enterprise, persevering industry, love of liberty, love of order, and obedience to the law. The truth of the proposition finds an immediate response in the consciousness of all who have ever heard or studied the Saxon's history; and universal assent, in the plainest language, is cheerfully accorded to the doctrine, as expressing thus far the incontrovertible truths of nature. But apply the same doctrine to another race; demon-

strate from history and present circumstances, that certain characteristics strikingly different from those of the Saxon have ever belonged to and still distinguish this race—that where isolated and left to itself, its modes of progress will be different—that, to render its progress similar to the Saxon's, a different management will be required; and apprehension is at once excited (though the truth is secretly acknowledged) lest the inquiry should provoke offence, and it is pronounced invidious and inexpedient to encourage discussions in which the defects as well as the favourable aspects of a large body of people are involved. But further, where this body of people is found to compose a large division of the inhabitants of the British isles, sharing equal privileges, and governed by similar laws with all British subjects; it is then judged in the highest degree impolitic to admit the importance or even the existence of differences of race; and the Saxon mind absolutely endeavours to compel itself into the belief, that with equal laws and institutions, and equal facilities for progress, all groups of men, whether isolated or otherwise, may be converted into thorough-going Saxons. Surprise is expressed that this conversion is still uneffected, and apparently as far off as ever; and as a solution of the paradox of centuries—the difficulty of all governments—every cause is substituted, every explanation offered—but the true.

To meet the difficulty boldly, and shew to the Celt

in what his deficiencies consist; to offer him the hand of fellowship, with the "encouragement" he stands so much in need of; to teach him that his prosperity would be best secured by the co-operation of the English people, with whom his destinies are permanently united, would surely be a wiser policy than to persist in the futile attempt to alter nature's laws, by a stubborn adherence to a line of treatment which has led only to disappointment and recriminations on both sides—on the one, for withholding required assistance—on the other, for not having improved by self-reliant industry the national resources of the country, and the advantages common to all in equal privileges and equal laws.

The late Sir Robert Peel, a man far in advance of his time, the extent of whose views was evidently not comprehended, shewed by his celebrated proposal to infuse more Saxon spirit by a new plantation, that he well understood the real necessities of Ireland. He felt that as long as she remained isolated, without Saxon example and assistance, *while at the same time subjected to Saxon competition*, progress at all approaching that of England was not to be expected; and he aimed to accomplish that with rapidity, which he believed to be essential to her lasting improvement. To have carried out this great project successfully, at the time he suggested it, would have required a mind equal to that of its proposer. Its difficulties would probably

be such, even now, as few could surmount. A more easy though less speedy method, however, towards the same object, may be expected to succeed, on principles of which the explanation has been attempted in the foregoing pages;—by removing as far as possible the obstacles which ignorance, prejudice, and circumstance have created, to open a way by which Saxon enterprise, through its own expansive force, may gain access to the recesses of the country, bearing with it the true remedies for Irish evils, in example and instruction ably supplied, employment freely given, and abundant capital expended. Various obstacles have been discussed under previous headings. Another, also noticed on a former occasion, remains still to be considered with regard to the means required for its removal.

Among all the characteristics of the Saxon, there is perhaps none more prominent than his love of order, and his respect for laws of his own making. Without the liberty of making and enforcing his own laws, he cannot flourish. In every country where he forms a new settlement, his first object is the establishment of order, his next, the development of the new country's resources. Without the protection of law, his industry cannot take root; and if that is absolutely denied him, he quits the country, and looks elsewhere. In another place we have dwelt at some length on the opposite character and habits of the Celt in this particular, and on the existence in Ireland of a formidable

conspiracy, which in countless instances has set law at defiance, and prevented the introduction of Saxon improvement. The great importance of clearly understanding this great obstacle to Irish progress led to an examination of the system of ribbonism, founded on the evidence given before the committee of the House of Lords in 1839. The peculiar character of the criminal acts arising from this system, in the employment of strangers for their perpetration, and the difficulty and often impossibility of detection, were noticed, and the existence of this conspiracy at the present time to a large extent inferred, from the same character attaching to late outrages. No one thoroughly acquainted with the country hesitates to admit the still widespread influence of the system; but all doubts on the subject must be removed, by the testimony of men the best qualified of all others to ascertain truth in such matters—the Roman Catholic priesthood of Ireland. Their primate, in a late pastoral address, declares that he has heard with sorrow that secret societies are extending, and the evil appears to him of such magnitude, that he threatens with the punishment of excommunication every one connected with these “illicit combinations,” as he styles them. He specially indicates some of these, and among them the ribbon society, as notorious. The threat of so severe a punishment shews, at least, belief in the general existence of the crime, and belief in such a quarter may be taken as

conclusive proof. The formidable nature and wide extent of this conspiracy may, then, be considered as perfectly well ascertained; but it is a curious fact that in the least distressed districts its operations are most manifested. When distress prevails, it appears to lose its energy; and it is only when a gleam of prosperity returns, that its spirit revives. This fact, as before observed, shews a most remarkable point of difference between Celtic and Saxon character—one never yet comprehended in England. In the latter country, distress is the sure forerunner of disturbance; but with the return of prosperity, the Saxon love of order is restored. In Ireland the rule is reversed. Distress paralyses, and with better times come agitation and secret conspiracies. This peculiar feature of the Celt is extremely puzzling to British governments, and leads to frequent disappointment. Arguing from cause and effect as seen in England, they imagine that the same remedies will be followed by the results in both countries. “Give employment, and the people will be quiet,” is the universal cry. The advice, in itself, is unexceptionable. Employment is most desirable in all cases, but the expected result of quiet will, in Ireland, be too often looked for in vain. The history of such experiments is usually this. A great work is undertaken, we will suppose by the Board of Works, in a part of the country where ribbonism prevails. Some hundreds of the starving population get imme-

diate and continuous employment. Wages higher than the usual average of the country are agreed upon, and punctually paid. The circumstances of the people improve, and the ribbon system immediately begins to shew its revival, in anonymous notices, strikes, and outrages. The authorities are puzzled, and the work is perhaps suspended, a proceeding which at once restores quiet—for with the return of distress comes peace. The work is again commenced, and by judicious temporary suspensions, as occasion requires, and fearless bearing on the part of the superintendent, may be carried on to a successful termination, in spite of this insane spirit of combination.* But with private

* Combination is also of frequent occurrence in England. It shews itself generally in open remonstrance, and equally open acts of violence, or in sullen refusal to work. It is often founded on just grievance. It is not easily put down; and when starvation begins to press, there is then most danger of outrage. Combinations in England are mostly confined to the workmen themselves, and any great crime (such as a murder) is almost sure to be followed by the capture and conviction of the criminal. He meets with no general sympathy, and therefore cannot escape, as in Ireland. In Wales there is a difference. The Rebecca riots may be still in the memory of many. An organised, rapidly-spreading system of opposition to an unpopular law, resembling, in the general sympathy excited and the consequent success of the combinator, the Ribbon system of Ireland, was got up on short notice, some years ago, and became so formidable from its extent, that the authorities were at last obliged to yield, and the obnoxious impost was withdrawn. Luckily, Wales has long been free from professed agitators and other exciting causes. The Celt, if not *acted upon*, is everywhere the most friendly, inoffensive, and contented of men.

L

enterprise the case is different, and the first cessation of work is often unhappily a final one.

This plan of suspending the work, on the occurrence of outrage, has been found most successful by those engaged in the Shannon drainage and other government improvements. Prompt punishment, falling directly on all the guilty together, speedily checked this pernicious system, and effected a great reformation in the habits of the workmen. If a similar remedy could be applied in all cases of outrage in Ireland, equal success would assuredly attend it. But here lies the difficulty. Ribbon outrage most frequently escapes detection. The people feel themselves strong in close union, and laugh at the law. The perpetrator receives sympathy and shelter in every house. Demoralization is increased by the easy defeat of law, and the hands of the guilty are strengthened.

A plan for the prevention of crime of this character, was suggested and carried into execution with remarkable success by the present Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. An outrage of magnitude occurring, and the perpetrators as usual evading discovery, a large police force was dispatched to the scene of action, the expense levied forthwith on the guilty district, and immediate payment enforced. The promptness of the punishment, and its comprehensive action, produced a marvellous effect; and the plan, since pursued on several occasions, has been found of essential service to the country.

The trial of a temporary measure, specially directed against the ribbon system, rendering it a transportable offence to harbour or conceal or aid in the escape of the suspected criminal, was judged necessary about three years since, in a disturbed locality in the south of Ireland; and a few examples soon occurring in which the extreme punishment was carried out, much dismay was created, and an immediate and striking diminution of crime followed.

To defeat the machinations of a society whose operations set all ordinary laws at defiance, is manifestly the duty of every government, but its paramount necessity as regards Ireland will not be comprehended until a true estimate be formed of Celtic qualities; that for good or evil, the strength of the Celt consists in union; that, though naturally excitable, and the easy prey of agitation, his social habits, when not distorted by evil influences, are of the most friendly and hospitable kind; that, freed from these influences, he is easily contented, easily managed, easily governed; that there are then no peculiar difficulties in detecting crime, and that it is only when numbers are leagued together, in a wide-spread conspiracy to defeat law that these difficulties arise.

In the tendency of the Celtic character to the formation of such conspiracies consist, in truth, the obstacles, so long notorious, to the effectual administration of the law in Ireland. Could this tendency be

counteracted, and the complete suppression of illegal combinations effected, the present British criminal code would be amply sufficient to afford protection to the most timid.

The inference from these views is plain. In all legislation for the prevention of crime in Ireland, attention should be mainly directed to the detection and suppression of these conspiracies, and not merely to the detection and punishment of individual offenders. The correctness of the principle here indicated is confirmed by the success of the Irish viceroy's measures, and of the means used against combination among the labourers in the government works. The mode in both cases was the same; punishment falling on all the guilty together, the abettors as well as the principals, and, above all, promptness in its application. The obvious objections to the frequent use of such coercive measures are, first, that the innocent would suffer with the guilty, and secondly, that by this extension of arbitrary power, precedents dangerous to liberty would be established. These are serious objections, and in a country like Great Britain, where liberty is so jealously guarded, and everything bordering on arbitrary power so suspiciously repelled, urgent necessity alone can reconcile men's minds to their adoption. The first objection is somewhat lessened by the fact, that wherever this necessity occurs, that is, in the parts of the country where this spirit of combination prevails actively, few

if any of the lower classes can succeed in keeping entirely aloof from contamination; many, who otherwise would have been well disposed, being obliged in self-defence to join the secret society, in order to avoid the suspicion and enmity of the great body. To these, and to all friends of order, the penalty incurred would be light when balanced with the relief obtained by the extinction of the system. The force of the second objection may be qualified by the temporary nature of such acts, and by the constant vigilance of parliament; but in whatever way the undue assumption of power is to be guarded against, the evil itself of extensive combination is of too great magnitude to be left untouched. The revival and present alleged increase [of the fact, no one acquainted with Ireland can entertain a doubt] of the ribbon society, should receive the most anxious attention of government. As long as this conspiracy shall be permitted to continue, so long will the large police force now actively employed in Ireland, consisting of nearly thirteen thousand men, exclusive of the Dublin metropolitan force, at an expense of more than half a million annually, have to be maintained; very probably it will be largely increased, and will thus form a standing army much more dangerous to general liberty, than the enactment of temporary coercive measures, with additional powers to the Irish executive.

It should never be forgotten, that without protection for life and property, Saxon industry cannot flourish,

and Saxon capital will not approach. The gradual enlightenment, which it is to be hoped may be the fruit of education and other improvement, may do a great deal in preparing the people for a change of habits ; but if a rapid and permanent progress is to be obtained through *Saxon co-operation*, Ireland's great requirement, the effectual rooting out of this spirit of combination by the strong arm of the law must be regarded as its essential antecedent.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

THE foregoing suggestions for the improvement of Ireland have been offered as inferrible from the permanent mental characters of the occupying races.

Care has been taken to dwell only on such measures as, from their reference to the most important requirements, may be considered worthy of attention by those interested in the durable advancement of this country.

All purely religious questions have been avoided as much as possible, as being subjects the discussion of which, at present, as far as the great necessities of Ireland in a temporal point of view are concerned, could lead to no directly useful purpose, and as having, in reality, but little connexion with the objects proposed in the title of this work.

Not that pure religion does not exercise a mighty power over the minds of those who are spiritually influenced by it, nor that even its nominal profession does not controul and humanize and incline to order the mass who live within its atmosphere. Its power all must admit. But it must be admitted also, that

religion, though controlling the passions of the individual, does not convert one temperament into another—does not change the substratum of race—does not, for instance, infuse that insatiable appetite for active enterprise and world-wide speculation, which in various degrees distinguishes the progress of one people; while, on the other hand, it cannot remove, though it may modify to some extent, the contentedness with little, the attachment to home, the want of self-reliant enterprise—which we have described as marked traits in another.

Similarity of religion would, no doubt, be one of the best aids to destroy prejudices and remove the evils of isolation, but is such universal change to be considered as likely to be brought about quickly by any human means that can be employed? Are we to wait till this change shall be effected? Would the discussion of this subject here be profitable or otherwise?

It has been shewn that to attempt the improvement of a country by legislative measures, with any certainty of success, the mental constitution of its inhabitants must not be disregarded—that heretofore, with respect to Ireland, the studious omission of this element, in all attempts at remedial treatment, has led to perplexities without number, and a general impression of the existence of some unintelligible and insurmountable difficulty—that a careful study of the Irish people only can solve the paradox—that the unfavourable charac-

teristics of all races are preserved by isolation—that many causes have tended to keep up isolation in Ireland, such as difference of language, traditional prejudices, want of the means of free intercourse, and the native excitability displayed so often in acts of turbulence and outrage exercising a repulsive influence on the approach of Saxon civilization—that a leading principle in the treatment of Ireland should be the complete removal of this pernicious condition, isolation—that this may be effected by various measures which need not here be recapitulated—that much may be done by legislation if directed by true principles—that, in short, Ireland, if properly studied, will no longer be found a paradox and difficulty, and; if properly treated, may become a flourishing and happy portion of the United Empire.

We cannot conclude without again protesting against the opinion, that the admission of natural differences between two races implies, on the whole, the necessary inferiority of one of them.

The Celtic race, which has for many ages occupied a most prominent position among the other races of mankind, and still exercises a prodigious influence on the destinies of the world, is not to be considered and treated as an inferior race, because found to differ from the Saxon in many important particulars.

Though unable to rival the latter in wealth-producing enterprise, and suffering therefore from Saxon

competition, when subjected to it by the accidents of geographical position, and enforced connexion without real union, it nevertheless excels in many of the qualities which improve and adorn humanity. Celtic refinement, sensitive appreciation of the beautiful, inventive genius, brilliant and exciting eloquence, quickness and correctness of conception and skilfulness of hand—have long tended much to soften the natural asperities of other races, and in these gifts of nature, if the balance be held impartially, the Celtic scale will be found to have a great preponderance.

In natural affection and sensibility to refined social enjoyments, the race stands pre-eminent, and its influence on manners has given a polish to civilized society throughout the world;—a polish which has contributed much to refine and improve the proud, and too often contemptuous, Saxon himself.

The Celtic race seems to fill a place in the economy of the world which no other race is so well fitted to occupy, and, no doubt, when great moral changes shall have been effected, its better tendencies will add much to the general sum of human happiness and improvement.

For evil, also, as well as good, its power is not to be despised. Celtic passions, excited and unrestrained, have terrific force, and may awaken fear and horror but not contempt.

The military prowess of the race has ever been dis-

tinguished, and though formidable to liberty, has more than once stemmed and repulsed the tide of Eastern conquest, and saved Europe from barbarian domination. At present this powerful race forms the chief barrier against the semi-barbarous Sarmatian; and, if its energies can be controlled and well guided, may thus indirectly prove a valuable safeguard to the liberty of the Saxon—a safeguard, however, in which (the present position of France considered) much dependence cannot prudently be reposed.*

It is unjust, then, to assert that difference implies inferiority. In the mysterious arrangements of providence, each race, no doubt, has its special office assigned, which, when properly discharged, will conduce to the general interests of mankind. What their ultimate destiny may be we need not ask. It may be presumed

* If the present President of the French Republic possessed the ambition and military talents of his great relative (who can say that another such may not arise at a future day?), and if selfish objects were to be his chief motives (are they ever wanting to the inordinately ambitious?) his policy might occasion much anxiety. A sudden proclamation of war would unite all France as one man. Success, (temporary of course) not unlikely to follow the first attempt, in the present disposition of despotic European powers, would again centralize in one individual the enormous military power of the most war-loving nation in the world, and, whatever the consequences to future progress, would establish indefinitely the reign of the new emperor in the hearts of the French people. A grave question for neighbouring nations is, "Should national defences be neglected?"

that, as long as isolation is continued, the same characteristics will be preserved.

By many the hope will not be considered Utopian which extends to the distant period, when increased knowledge, a mutual consciousness of natural deficiencies, and a true estimate of natural capabilities, will counteract the evil tendencies of every race—when a universal community of belief, and a sense of true interests, will draw together the different members of the whole human brotherhood, and when truth will overspread the earth “as the waters cover the sea.”

NOTE.—One word of explanation is necessary here. A main object of this little work being the suggestion of remedies for Celtic evils, the very worst points of Celtic character have been selected for remark and illustration on the principle, that for the successful application of treatment a knowledge of the whole extent and causes of disease is to be desired. As the unfavourable points of character in the Saxon race were not considered essential to the end in view, they have been very slightly noticed, and some of them, perhaps, altogether omitted. This comparison, therefore, is not to be considered as at all sufficiently favourable to the former race, whose intellectual powers and qualities of heart are second to those of no other race upon earth. With the welfare of the Celtic race the writer's interests are chiefly bound up ; and he will not, therefore, be accused of presumption in confessing, that their improvement and happiness are among the objects nearest his heart.

THE END.

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